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ELMER RUSSELL GREGOR

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RUNNING FOX

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This is the First
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—— 1919 ——

Won by Constantine L. Rasis

from

The Detroit Sunday News

The next instant his own arrow dropped his enemy to the ground [PAGE 174]

RUNNING FOX

BY

ELMER RUSSELL GREGOR

AUTHOR OF "WHITE OTTER," ETC., ETC.

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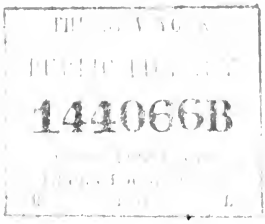
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ELMER RUSSELL GREGOR.

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RUNNING FOX

CHAPTER I

A LONELY VIGIL

HAVING reached the age of sixteen winters, Running Fox, the son of Black Panther, a famous Delaware war-chief, determined to establish his reputation as a warrior. He knew, however, that before he could gain admission into the gallant company of fighting men he would have to prove his courage and ability in some daring exploit. Running Fox believed that the Delawares would expect some extraordinary achievement from the son of their most noted chief, and he resolved to surpass the most noteworthy deeds of his tribesmen. He spent many days trying to think of something sufficiently heroic to gain him the fame he desired. As he could come to no decision, he finally went to his father, and

asked him to name the greatest possible achievement for a Delaware.

The eyes of the stern Delaware war-chief lighted with pride as he heard the bold request of his son. He spent some moments silently studying the face of the eager lad before him. Then, convinced that Running Fox was in earnest, he answered him.

"My son, you have asked me to tell you the greatest thing a Delaware can do. I will tell you. Far away toward Lowaneu, The-Place-Where-The-Cold-Comes-From, in the Mohawk camp, lives a great war-leader named Standing Wolf. You have heard our warriors talk about him at the council-fires. He has killed many of our people. We have fought many battles with him, but we cannot kill him. It must be that he bears a charmed life. We believe that he has some mysterious power. Many times our young men have surrounded him, but when they rushed in to destroy him he always killed most of them and escaped. He has done some wonderful things. It must be that he possesses some mysterious medicine charm. If you can go to the Mohawk camp and find out how

Standing Wolf gets his power it will be the greatest thing you can do."

"I will go," Running Fox cried, impulsively.

"My son, you are brave enough, but you speak fast like a child," replied Black Panther. "You must think about this thing. Then you will begin to see how hard it is. Many brave warriors have tried to do it. Not one found out about it. Most of them lost their lives. The Mohawks are as keen as wolves. When you enter their country, you will be in constant danger of losing your life. If they find your trail it will be hard to escape. But if you feel brave enough to try to do this great thing, then you must go and talk with Sky Dog. He is a great medicine-person, perhaps he will be able to help you. Now I have told you what to do."

"My father, I will do as you have told me," agreed Running Fox.

He went at once to find old Sky Dog, the venerable Delaware medicine-man. When Running Fox arrived at the medicine-lodge and drew aside the huge bear robe that hung before the entrance, he saw the aged medicine-man sitting upon the ground before a small fire. He was tossing small

handfuls of dried sweet-grass upon the embers, and droning some sort of medicine-song. He took no notice of the lad standing uneasily in the doorway, and Running Fox began to wonder whether he had better withdraw. While he hesitated, however, Sky Dog raised his head and looked to see who his visitor might be.

"Hi, I see some one standing in the doorway of my lodge," he said, peevishly. "The light is bad, and my eyes are old, so that I cannot tell who you are. Come in here, and let me look at you."

Running Fox entered, and stood before the med icine-man. Sky Dog nodded understandingly.

"Now I see who you are," he said. "You are the son of a great chief. Well, what do you want?" he demanded, sharply.

Running Fox suddenly felt bewildered in the presence of this great medicine-person. For some moments, therefore, he maintained an awkward silence.

"Well, have you no ears?" Sky Dog cried, impatiently. "I have asked you something. Has your tongue left your mouth? Come, I am not here to be stared at."

The sharp reproach instantly aroused Running Fox from his reverie. He saw that his stupid silence had angered Sky Dog, and he hastened to explain the reason for his visit.

Sky Dog seemed astounded at his boldness. He shook his head, and stared thoughtfully at the fire. It was a long time before he replied.

"You have spoken big words," he said, finally. "You are only a boy, and yet you have asked me to help you do something which our bravest warriors have been unable to do. Do you think that I will listen to such foolish prattle? No. You must show me that you are in earnest. Does your father know about this thing?"

"Yes, my father sent me here," replied Running Fox.

"Well, then I may do something about it," said Sky Dog. "But there are many things to be done before you can start on such a journey."

"I am listening," declared Running Fox.

"That is right. Well, first you must go to the sweat-lodge, and purify yourself so that you can pray to Getanittowit, the Great One. Then you must go away from the village for three days.

You must go to a high mountain, and ask Getanittowit, the Great One, to help you. You must sing medicine-songs. You must not eat anything but a handful of parched corn once each day. Perhaps if you do these things Getanittowit will take pity on you, and send you a vision. If that comes to pass you must come to me, and I will tell you the meaning of it. If you do not receive a vision it will be useless to set out upon the undertaking, for you will surely be killed. I have told you what to do. Go.''

Running Fox left the lodge in high spirits. He had little doubt that if he faithfully carried out the commands of Sky Dog he would receive aid and power that would enable him to achieve his ambition. He went to his father and told him what Sky Dog had said. Then he hurried to the sweat-lodge.

The Pimoakan, or sweat-lodge, was a low, dome-shaped structure made of willow boughs, and covered with several layers of animal robes. It was located close beside the river. As Running Fox approached it he saw Sky Dog and an aged as-

sistant heating stones at a fire near the entrance to the lodge.

When the hot stones had been rolled into the lodge Sky Dog ordered Running Fox to remove his clothing and crawl into the Pimoakan. Then the medicine-man and his companion filled raw-hide buckets with river water, and dashed it over the hot stones. When the lodge was filled with steam they hung a number of heavy bear robes over the entrance, and left the lad to his fate.

For some moments Running Fox believed that he would smother in the stifling clouds of steam. Gasping and choking, he was on the point of crying out to be released when he suddenly realized what it would mean. He told himself that such an act would not only disgust Sky Dog, but that it might even arouse the anger of Getanittowit, the Great One. The possibility frightened him. He endured the ordeal with the uncomplaining fortitude of a hardened warrior. The hot, steam-laden atmosphere induced profuse perspiration, and water streamed from every pore in his body. Running Fox grew weak and dizzy. He fought to overcome his weakness, however, for he realized that

it was only by thus cleansing himself that he might become fit to hold communion with Getanittowit, the Great One.

While Running Fox was confined in the lodge, Sky Dog sat just outside the entrance, chanting medicine-songs. He ordered Running Fox to repeat them until he could sing them through without a mistake. Then Sky Dog drew aside the bear robes, and commanded Running Fox to come out. The lad staggered out, pale and faint. He presented a pitiful appearance. Sky Dog pointed toward the river, and Running Fox stumbled down the bank and threw himself into the icy water. The shock quickly revived him, and in a few moments he clambered out quite recovered from his experience.

"Now you can go away and rest," said Sky Dog. "But you must keep thinking about the thing you wish to do. Then, when you feel strong, you must take your robe and a little parched corn, and go away. You must do that before two suns have passed. Go to some high place and stay there three days. During that time you must continue to ask Getanittowit to take pity upon you, and

send you a vision. You must also keep singing the medicine-songs. You must not take any weapons with you for that would make Getanittowit very angry. At the end of three days come back and tell me what you have seen. Now I cannot tell you anything more. Go."

Late the following day Running Fox took his deer-skin robe, and a small bag containing parched corn, and left the village. He made his way toward a high pine-clad mountain directly behind the great Delaware camp. There were few who saw him go away, for Running Fox had carefully guarded his plans. Two, however, his father and old Sky Dog, stood together at the edge of the village and watched him disappear into the shadows of the forest. Then they turned silently away, and walked thoughtfully to their lodges.

When Running Fox finally reached the summit of the mountain the sun had disappeared, and the purple evening shadows were settling in the valleys. Seating himself upon the trunk of a fallen pine the young Delaware looked wonderingly upon the glorious panorama that lay before him. Far below was the Delaware village beside a splendid

river which, like a great serpent, glided down from the north between parallel ridges of low wooded hills. Behind those ridges were others, rising one behind the other, like great billows, until they eventually ended in a long, irregular line of ghostly gray peaks far away against the brilliant sunset sky. The entire country was covered with a vast primeval forest which continued in all directions as far as the eye could see. At various intervals isolated woodland lakes flashed from its somber green background and rushing mountain cataracts blazed narrow white trails down the hillsides. It was an unspoiled picture of natural grandeur, a land blessed by the bounteous generosity of Getanittowit, who had filled it with blessings for his children. The waters teemed with fish, the forests swarmed with game, and the air was perfumed with the fragrance of the pines. Running Fox looked upon it with pride and affection, for it was the home of the great Lenape nation, his people, the Delawares.

Then the lad turned his eyes toward the north, and his face grew stern and threatening. He realized that he was looking upon the hunting grounds

of his enemies, the fierce and warlike Mohawks. Somewhere in the great silent wilderness that stretched for unknown leagues beyond the headwaters of the river was the Mohawk village in which lived the famous war-chief, Standing Wolf. Running Fox knew that to learn the secret which would enable his people to triumph over their enemies he must find and enter the hostile camp. For the first time he began to understand the difficulty and peril of his task. It seemed like a foolhardy undertaking for an untried lad of sixteen winters. Running Fox thought of the experienced warriors who had sacrificed their lives in the attempt. For a moment or so it weakened his confidence. He even wondered whether he might not have chosen a feat beyond his ability. The idea angered him. He told himself that no task was too great for the son of Black Panther.

Running Fox continued his reveries until darkness closed about the mountain-top. Then, as the fires began to twinkle down in the Delaware camp, he rose and turned his face toward the sky. He stood some moments gazing at the starry heavens.

Then he suddenly began his appeal to Getanittowit, the Great One.

Late in the night Running Fox was interrupted by the sound of something moving stealthily through the forest. He was instantly alert, for he recalled that more than one daring Iroquois scout had been detected spying upon the Delaware camp from the summit of that very mountain. For a moment Running Fox longed for his weapons. The next instant he banished the thought for fear of angering Getanittowit. He believed that as long as he sang the sacred medicine-songs, and repeated the words which old Sky Dog had taught him, he would be safe from all danger. Thus assured, he listened without fear to the mysterious sounds in the darkness. At last a startled snort told him that it was only Achtu, the deer. A few moments later he heard it dashing away through the woods.

Dawn found the devout lad, heavy-eyed and weary, still gazing into the sky and calling upon Getanittowit to help him. "O Getanittowit, take pity on me and help me to do what I have set out to do. O Getanittowit, send me a vision. O

Getanittowit, I have sung the sacred medicine-songs many times to make you glad. O Getanittowit, take pity on me and help me." Running Fox continued to repeat the earnest appeal and sing the sacred songs throughout the day. With the falling of darkness, however, the exhausted lad ceased his exertions, and soon afterward fell into a heavy slumber.

The following day Running Fox hovered on the verge of collapse. The scant daily ration of parched corn was insufficient to maintain his strength, and the long, trying ordeal began to sap his vitality. He had stationed himself on a bare granite ledge which formed the very peak of the mountain. There, in the full glare of the scorching summer sun, he stood and offered his prayers to Getanittowit. At times his head reeled and his legs trembled beneath him, but when that happened he staggered to the shade of the forest, and refreshed himself at an icy spring which bubbled forth between the roots of a massive hemlock. Then he toiled painfully up to the ledge, and continued the sacred ceremony which he felt confi-

dent would eventually win him the favor of Getanittowit.

More than half of the day had passed when Running Fox discovered something which filled him with dismay. Far away toward the west threatening black clouds were piling up above the hill-tops. The young Delaware watched them with great anxiety. He knew that the Delawares considered it a very bad omen to be overtaken by a thunder storm while conducting one of their sacred ceremonies. It was considered especially significant if one were praying to Getanittowit, the Great One. Under those circumstances a thunderstorm was accepted as a sign of Getanittowit's displeasure. The thought filled Running Fox with panic. Keeping anxious watch of the darkening western sky, the superstitious young Delaware continued to chant the sacred medicine-songs to avert the ill fortune that threatened him.

It was not long, however, before Running Fox realized that the storm was actually approaching. The ominous black clouds had formed into a great mass that was sweeping rapidly toward the sun, and the low, threatening rumble of distant thun-

der echoed among the hills. The air grew hot and stifling. A quick, darting line of fire cut the western sky. Running Fox turned his eyes appealingly toward the sun, as he sang the medicine-songs in a high, hysterical tone. Each moment he saw the storm gaining greater force. The sky grew blacker, the thunder sounded louder, and the lightning flashes became more frequent. Then the sun disappeared behind the edge of the storm-clouds, and a peculiar yellow light flooded the valleys. An uncanny hush had fallen upon the wilderness. Running Fox was awed by the sound of his own voice. It sounded harsh and unnatural for he was almost screaming the sacred songs in his eagerness to make them effective. Then another sound reached his ears. The wind was roaring over the ridge to the westward. A few moments later it swept over the mountain-top. A hawk sailed across the sky on the crest of the gale. Running Fox ceased singing to watch it. He wished that he, too, might flee as easily. Before the bird had disappeared, the storm was upon him. It began with a startling crash of thunder, and a crackling flash of light.

Believing that his long ordeal had been in vain, and that he had in some way offended Getanittowit, the Great One, Running Fox wished to die. He knew that if he returned to his people with the disfavor of Getanittowit upon him he would be shunned as one in league with Medsit, the Evil One. He might even be driven from the camp. His heart failed him as he thought of the disgrace which he had brought upon his father. Then, as the first great drops of rain began to fall, he turned his eyes toward the village. A number of people were standing at the edge of the camp, gazing at the mountain-top. Somewhat apart from the others stood a solitary figure, whom the disconsolate lad thought he recognized as his father. The possibility roused him. He believed that Black Panther was there to give him courage and to urge him to continue his petition. The thought filled him with hope. Running Fox told himself that perhaps Getanittowit was only testing his faith and courage. Encouraged by the idea, he determined to show himself worthy. A few moments later, therefore, when the Delaware camp was swept from his sight by a terrific deluge of rain,

Running Fox turned his face fearlessly toward the sky, and again sang the medicine-songs. He was a heroic figure as he stood alone on the mountain-top in the fury of the storm, calling upon the great being whom his people believed ruled over all their destinies. Most of the time his voice was lost in the crashing of thunder and the roaring of the wind, but in every lull it rose strong and confident with the new hope that had entered his heart.

"O Getanittowit, I am still here singing the sacred medicine-songs," he cried. "O Getanittowit, take pity on me. O Getanittowit, do not send me back to my people without something good to tell them. O Getanittowit, when I first heard the dreadful Thunder Beings I was afraid. Now my heart is strong again. O Getanittowit, take pity on me."

A terrifying crash of thunder was followed by a blinding flash of lightning that shattered a huge dead pine and filled the air with giant splinters. Running Fox was less than three bow-lengths from the tree. When it was struck he staggered backward with his hands before his face, and fell to the ground.

When Running Fox finally regained consciousness, he found himself staring into darkness. For some moments he blinked his eyes to make sure that they were open. When he had convinced himself, a great fear entered his heart. He told himself that Getanittowit had destroyed his sight. Raising his eyes toward the heavens in mute appeal he was astonished to see the stars. He scarcely dared hope that they were real. He turned his head and looked about him. He saw the dim, shadowy outlines of rocks, and the shattered trunk of the giant pine. Then the truth suddenly flashed upon him. It was night. Getanittowit had taken pity upon him, and brought him back to life. Running Fox attempted to rise and give thanks, but he was too weak. Besides, he was wet and cold. He longed for his fire-sticks. Then, as he began to tremble, he suddenly remembered his robe. He crawled about until he found it. It was quite dry on the under side, and he wrapped it closely about him. Then exhaustion overcame him, and he fell back unconscious.

Running Fox had barely closed his eyes when he heard some one calling his name. Then he

saw Machque, the bear. For a moment Running Fox felt uneasy without his weapons, for the bear was a huge creature and looked very fierce. However, as he had heard it call his name he knew that it must be a medicine-creature, and he believed that it had come to help him. While he was looking at the bear, he heard some one behind him calling his name. He looked and saw Achtu, the deer. It showed no fear of the bear, and walked up and stood beside it. Then Running Fox knew that they must be medicine-creatures. As he was thinking what to say to them, he again heard his name, and this time it was Woakus, the fox. It, too, went and stood beside the others. Then came Quenischquney, the panther, and Wisawanik, the squirrel, and Gokhos, the owl, and the terrible Wischalowe, the rattlesnake, whom the Delawares called "The Frightener." When they all were assembled, the bear was made the leader.

"Running Fox, we have come here to help you," said this strange medicine-creature. "You have stood the test, and now we are going to help you. You are setting out to do a hard thing. If you do exactly as we tell you, you will go through with

it. What I have to say is short. You know that my people are brave and powerful. You must fight and kill one of my people. Then you must eat his heart, and wear his claws about your neck. This will make you as strong and as brave as we are. I have finished."

"Running Fox, you have heard some one who is stronger and braver than I am," declared Achtu, the deer. "But you must remember that strength and courage will not always save you. When you cannot fight you must run. My people are the fastest people who live in the woods. You are going out to do a great thing. I will tell you that you must kill one of my people, and eat his heart. Then you will be able to run faster than your enemies."

"Running Fox, you have heard Machque, who is strong and brave, and Achtu, who is very swift, but you must also be very cautious. You are going upon a dangerous journey. If you are not careful you will surely be killed. My people are very hard to catch. If you can kill one of our old men, and cut off his ears, you will be as sharp as we are," said Woakus, the fox.

"Running Fox, you have heard some great people," growled Quenischquney, the panther. "Well, now I am going to help you. It is a good thing to be strong, and brave, and swift, and cautious, but you must also be able to steal up and surprise your enemies. No one can do that better than my people. But I must warn you that our young men are very fierce, and you will have a hard fight if you try to kill one of them. However, I will give you power to do it. Then you must take the longest claw from each foot, and keep them about you."

"Running Fox, I am smaller and weaker than all these great people who have talked to you," barked Wisawanik, the squirrel. "However, I am also more nimble, and better at hiding. If you wish to travel safely to the village where Standing Wolf lives, you must be nimble and good at hiding. If you will kill one of our chiefs who wear the black robes, and carry his scalp with you, you will be able to hide so well that your enemies will not be able to find you."

"Running Fox, you have been promised some good things, but I am going to offer you the best

of all,'' boasted Gokhos, the owl. ''If you have all the powers that these good friends are going to give you, it will all be useless without my gift. When darkness falls then it will be safer to travel through the forest. But to do that you must have eyes that can look through the night. My people have this gift. If you can kill one of our great white leaders, who live far away in the country of the Mohawks, you will not only be able to see as well at night as by day, but you will also have magic power to overcome whoever may try to harm you.''

''Running Fox, you know me; I am called 'The Frightener','' said Wischalowe, the rattlesnake. ''Whoever hears my warning trembles with fear. If you will kill one of our old men, and tie his war-drum to your belt so that it makes a noise when you walk you will frighten away all who seek to harm you.''

When Wischalowe finished speaking they all remained silent, waiting for some talk from Running Fox. For some moments he was at a loss as to just how to address these strange medicine-creatures. While he was thinking just how to

thank them they suddenly disappeared. At that moment Running Fox regained consciousness. Day had dawned, and the sun was well above the eastern ridges. For a moment or so the bewildered lad looked anxiously about him, expecting to see the strange creatures that had appeared in his delirium. When he failed to find them his heart gave a great bound of joy, for he believed that they had been medicine-creatures sent by Getanittowit to help him. The idea gave him strength, and he struggled to his feet and offered thanks to Getanittowit. Then he toiled painfully down the mountainside. It took him most of the day to reach the valley. When he finally staggered into the camp he went directly to old Sky Dog, and collapsed as he reached the door of his lodge.

CHAPTER II

INTO THE PERILOUS NORTH

THAT night Running Fox sufficiently recovered his strength to tell his dream to Sky Dog, the medicine-man. The latter listened with much interest as the excited lad described his conference with the strange medicine-creatures. When he had finished his story, Sky Dog assured him that the dream was a good omen. He declared that if Running Fox would do as the medicine-creatures had advised he would pass safely through all perils, and live to accomplish his purpose.

Running Fox hurried to his father's lodge with a joyful heart. Having been taught to believe all the simple superstitions of his people, he had implicit faith in the assurances of the medicine-man. Still he realized that his task was a difficult one. He knew that if the Mohawks discovered his trail they would hunt him down as relentlessly as a pack of wolves, and he felt sure that if he fell into

their hands death at the torture stake would be his only alternative. The thought sobered him. However, it soon fled from his mind, for he believed that the mysterious powers which he had received from the medicine-creatures, and his own courage and resourcefulness, would enable him to outwit his foes.

Black Panther was much impressed by the story of the dream. He, too, declared that it was a good omen. He immediately sent criers through the village inviting the people to a feast to celebrate his son's departure upon the war-trail.

When his plans became known Running Fox was besieged by a host of youthful volunteers who begged to accompany him. He refused them, however, as he was unwilling to assume the responsibility of a war-leader before he had tested his own courage and ability. Still there was one whom he found it difficult to deny. It was his friend, Spotted Deer, a lad of his own age, and his constant companion through all the happy years of boyhood. They had invariably shared every adventure, and the thought of being barred from the first real war-journey drove Spotted Deer into

a frenzy of despair. He argued, he coaxed, he reproached, but Running Fox refused to yield.

"No, my brother, I will not listen to your words," declared Running Fox. "A warrior must know how to fight before he leads his friends into danger. I have never faced an enemy. I do not know what will happen to me. Perhaps I shall do something foolish, and be killed. Spotted Deer, I must go alone. No, I will not change it in my heart."

"Running Fox, now I know that you will do this thing without me," replied Spotted Deer. "Well, I will not say anything more against it. I feel like a very old man."

The night before Running Fox planned to set out upon his journey his friends came to his father's lodge to talk with him. The last to leave was Spotted Deer. The two friends sat together a long time. Running Fox attempted to be light-hearted and gay, but Spotted Deer was moody and depressed. However, when Running Fox brought forth the new war-equipment which he had received from his father, Spotted Deer's eyes lighted with enthusiasm, and he became lively and inter-

ested. Then, having inspected the various articles, he immediately relapsed into gloomy silence.

"My brother, when the next sun comes you are going away," Spotted Deer said, solemnly, as he finally rose to leave. "Perhaps I shall never see you again. It is bad. I will not talk about it."

They clasped hands, and looked earnestly into each other's eyes. Then Spotted Deer hurried away. When he had gone Running Fox seated himself at the back of the lodge, and sat a long time staring moodily into the darkness.

That night Running Fox found it impossible to sleep. His mind was tortured by the thought of parting from his friend. Spotted Deer's words kept ringing in his ears: "Perhaps I shall never see you again." As the night dragged slowly along Running Fox was tempted to steal away while the inmates slept, to tell Spotted Deer that he might accompany him. He was dissuaded, however, by the fear of causing his friend's death. Thus the miserable lad fought his battle until the first gray light of dawn stole into the lodge, and then he finally determined to venture into the treacherous northern wilderness alone.

When Running Fox appeared in the village equipped for the war-trail, he received a stirring ovation from his tribesmen. As he left his father's lodge he was immediately surrounded by a company of enthusiastic friends, who paraded him about the camp to the accompaniment of shouts and war-songs. Spotted Deer, however, took no part in the celebration. Running Fox was greatly disturbed at his absence. When he finally asked about him he learned that an old woman had seen Spotted Deer hurrying away with his robe and weapons at dawn. She said that he had gone toward the south. The news filled Running Fox with gloom. He feared that grief might have driven Spotted Deer to some foolhardy resolve. However, Running Fox had little chance to think of him at the moment, for he soon found himself the center of a great throng of people who had gathered to do him honor.

The lad appeared to splendid advantage as he stood beside his father in the center of the camp. He was tall and graceful, with a fearless face and flashing black eyes. Unlike his father and the warriors, who wore their hair cropped close to the

scalp, Running Fox had hair that reached to his shoulders. His dress was like that of the older men. He was naked above the waist, and wore a short buckskin skirt or tunic which extended to his knees. Fringed buckskin leggings covered his limbs. His moccasins were of elk-hide gayly decorated with dyed sweet grass. His equipment included an elk-skin robe, a hickory bow, a buckskin case filled with arrows, a flint knife, a stone war-club, a set of fire drills and a small bag filled with parched corn.

"My friends, here stands a young man dressed for the war-trail," Black Panther told the Delawares. "Look closely at him for you may never see him again. He is going upon a dangerous journey. Yes, he is going into the country of our enemies, the boastful Mohawks, to find out how Standing Wolf gets his power. It is a great thing to do. If he lives through it I will give away many good presents. I have finished."

The Delawares greeted the announcement with words of approval. Several prominent warriors made speeches praising the lad for his courage, and urging him to kill many Mohawks. Then old Sky

Dog sang a number of sacred medicine-songs, and fastened a small buckskin bag containing sacred herbs about the neck of Running Fox to protect him from harm.

At the conclusion of the ceremony Running Fox set out upon his journey. He followed a well-worn Delaware hunting trail that led northward along the river. It was Kitschinipen, the summer planting season, and a great primeval wilderness was at its best. The day was glorious. The sky was cloudless, the air was soft and balmy and the earth was flooded with sunshine. Wild flowers dotted the trail, and birds sang from the trees and thickets. Running Fox found much to interest him. He stopped to watch Tiskemanis, the noisy blue fisher bird, plunge into the water after his prey. He called cheerily to Mehokuiman, the red bird. He frightened ugly Gundaschees, the water-snake, from his sunny log at the edge of the river. Then he heard the stealthy approach of Achtu, the deer. As he had been advised to kill one of the old bucks by the medicine-deer, Running Fox hastily prepared his arrow and concealed himself behind a tree. In a few moments the deer ap-

proached the river to drink. It was a doe, however, and the young Delaware withheld his arrow. He knew that she had a fawn concealed in some nearby thicket, and he had been taught to spare the mother and young of all creatures that there might always be plenty of game for the hunters. He waited until the doe had finished drinking, and then he showed himself. For a moment the surprised creature stared at him with big frightened eyes, and then bounded gracefully into the woods.

"Go in peace, my sister, I will not harm you," cried Running Fox.

Soon afterward Running Fox had an experience that filled him with gloomy forebodings. He was seated upon a boulder at the edge of the water when he heard the harsh cries of Woapalanne, the great white-headed war-eagle. Looking into the sky he discovered the bird soaring in great circles directly above him. He feared that it was a bad omen, for old Sky Dog had told him that the sudden appearance of Woapalanne invariably meant war. Running Fox wondered if he was about to meet his enemies. Until that moment the possibility had never entered his mind, as he had considered

himself quite safe as long as he remained within the Delaware boundaries. Now, as the war-eagle continued to hover over him, he became suspicious.

"Hi, Woapalanne, I see you flying around up there," he cried, as he shook his bow at the eagle. "I hear you making a great noise up there. Sky Dog says it is a sign of war. Well, Woapalanne, you do not frighten me. I will not turn around. I have set out to do something, and I am going ahead with it. Woapalanne, Sky Dog says that you are a good friend. That is why I have told you what I am going to do. But you must not tell the Mohawks about me. That would be bad. Come, if you are a good friend you must help me. Now I am going up on top of that high mountain to look around."

However, as Running Fox turned to enter the forest the eagle suddenly changed its tactics, and flew away toward the south. This unexpected maneuver greatly upset the young Delaware. His thoughts instantly turned to his friend, Spotted Deer. Having learned that the latter had departed upon some mysterious mission to the southward, Running Fox read a warning in the final action

of the war-eagle. He believed that Spotted Deer was in peril. The thought refused to leave his mind.

When Running Fox reached the top of the ridge from which he planned to reconnoiter the surrounding country, his sharp eyes quickly discovered something which instantly aroused his interest. A thin wavering column of smoke was rising against the sky some distance to the southward. The sight of it filled him with emotion, for he knew that it came from the Delaware camp. The day was almost ended, and in the distant smoke cloud Running Fox saw a vision of the peaceful evening scene in the Delaware village. In fancy he saw the happy groups about the fires, and heard the songs and laughter. He wondered if he had been missed from the merry little company before his father's lodge. Twilight was gathering, and the smoke column was slowly fading into the shadows. Running Fox looked upon it with longing eyes, for he knew that it would soon be gone. The thought saddened him. That frail spiral of smoke seemed like the last tie that bound him to his people, and he dreaded to see it broken. When

it finally faded out in the dusk Running Fox felt a great loneliness surge into his heart.

After he had carefully examined the country through which he intended to pass on the following day, the young Delaware began to look for a safe place in which to spend the night. He believed that it might be dangerous to remain near the river, as he knew that hostile scouts often followed the waterways under cover of darkness. Besides, he was still upset by the actions of the war-eagle, and he determined to take every precaution. He finally decided to camp beside a little spring, high up on the mountainside.

Having killed a grouse earlier in the day, Running Fox broiled it over the embers of a tiny fire, which he was careful to conceal between two large rocks. Then, after he had eaten, he drew his robe about him, and sat with his back against a pine, listening to the night sounds of the wilderness. He heard Quekolis, the whippoorwill, raising his doleful lament down near the river. Running Fox had heard the old men tell weird tales about that mournful bird, and as he listened to its monotonous serenade he wondered if it really did pos-

sess all the mysterious powers with which the superstitious story tellers credited it. Then he heard shrill piping sounds from the grass, and he knew that the Zelozelous, the little black cricket people, were singing their medicine-songs. Some time later Running Fox was startled by a piercing scream that sounded from a distant ridge. He listened anxiously until it was repeated, and then he recognized it as the hunting cry of soft-footed Nianque, the lynx. Then the brooding, mysterious night-hush fell upon the forest.

Running Fox rose and raised his hands toward the heavens. After a few moments of reverent silence he began to pray to Getanittowit. He asked for courage and strength to perform his task. Then, after he had sung one of the sacred medicine-songs to drive away any evil spirits that might have discovered his fire, he prepared a couch of sweet-fern and lay down to sleep.

Two-thirds of the night had passed when Running Fox suddenly found himself sitting up, with his bow in his hands, staring anxiously into the dark. He did not know what had awakened him, and for a long time he neither heard or saw any-

thing to give him a clue. He began to fear that he had been dreaming. Then a twig snapped, and he became suspicious. He knew that Mohawk scouts often ventured far into the Delaware hunting grounds, and he feared that one of those sharp-eyed foes had discovered his fire. The thought alarmed him. The possibility of an unseen enemy stealing upon him under cover of the night set his heart throbbing wildly. Still he had no idea of running away. Lying close to the ground, he fitted an arrow to his bow, and strained his eyes in an effort to find the mysterious prowler. For some time the silence was unbroken, and he began to think that he had been needlessly alarmed by some passing beast of the wilderness. Then he heard sounds which led him to believe that some one was cautiously approaching his hiding place. Convinced that he was about to experience his first encounter with an enemy, Running Fox waited with the calm reliance of a veteran. The noise had suddenly ceased, however, and the young Delaware believed that his foe had stopped to listen. A few moments later the soft querulous call of Gokhotit, the little red owl, sounded through the

night. It seemed barely a bow-shot away, and Running Fox redoubled his vigilance. When he heard it again he became greatly excited. Then it was repeated a third time, and Running Fox breathed easier, for he recognized it as a signal from his friend, Spotted Deer.

Running Fox was undecided as to just what to do. His first impulse was to reply to the familiar signal, but he overcame it and remained silent. As he saw no reason to alter the decision he had made in the Delaware camp, he planned to steal away and elude his friend under the protection of the darkness. However, it soon became evident that sharp-witted Spotted Deer had guessed his intention.

"Hi, my brother, have you closed your ears to the greeting of a friend?" Spotted Deer inquired reproachfully. "I know that you are somewhere close by. Yes, I believe you are hiding away in the night. I have followed you here, and I will not turn back. No. If I do not find you, then as soon as it grows light I will follow your trail. Running Fox, I am going into the country of the boastful Mohawks with you. It is useless for you

to say anything more against it. I have set out to do this thing, and now I am going through with it. Come, my brother, let us meet, and talk together. Now I am going to listen for something."

Running Fox still remained silent. However, the loyalty and devotion of his friend had greatly affected him, and his heart was filled with conflicting emotions. He found it harder than ever to ignore the stirring appeal, and yet it seemed foolish to renew the discussion with Spotted Deer. At last, however, his great love for his friend forced him to answer.

"My brother, I have listened to your words. You have done a foolish thing to come here. I was going to run away, but now I am going to stay here and talk with you. I believe it is the best thing to do."

A few moments afterward they clasped hands, while their eyes flashed the welcome that neither could utter. Although he was still determined to continue the journey alone, nevertheless Running Fox was delighted to see his friend. He knew now that his fears concerning him had come to nought, and it filled him with joy. It was evident that

Spotted Deer had turned toward the south to fool the Delawares, and then had circled around to intercept his friend. Running Fox admired his stratagem.

"Running Fox, I believe your heart is bad toward me," declared Spotted Deer. "You say that I have done a foolish thing. Perhaps it is true, but I will not turn back. If you do not listen to my words, then I will go away and let the Mohawks kill me. Now you know what I am thinking about. Yes, I am going through with it no matter how it comes out. I have finished."

"Spotted Deer, you are a good friend," Running Fox replied, warmly. "My heart is not bad toward you, but I must tell you that you have done a foolish thing. You must turn back. I am going ahead alone. I have told you about it many times. Now I must go through with it."

They argued the question throughout the night. Then, as dawn crept slowly out of the east, Running Fox finally yielded to the persuasion of Spotted Deer.

"Spotted Deer, I see that you intend to do as you say," declared Running Fox. "You say that

if you do not go with me you will let the Mohawks kill you. That is very bad. Well, that makes me feel different about it. You are my friend, and I will not let you throw away your life. If you feel like going with me I cannot say anything more against it. Perhaps you will be killed, but I cannot help it. You have asked me to do something, and now I have done it.''

''Running Fox, you have done a good thing,'' Spotted Deer cried, joyfully. ''Now I will sing again. I am going with you to find out about the great chief Standing Wolf. Perhaps we will have many fights with the Mohawks. You say that we may be killed. Well, my brother, we will die together. It is enough.''

CHAPTER III

A THRILLING ADVENTURE

THE sun was well above the mountains before the young Delawares descended to the river, and resumed the perilous journey into the north. Running Fox told Spotted Deer about the strange medicine-creatures that had appeared in his dream, and Spotted Deer became quite excited.

"That was a wonderful thing to happen to a person," he declared, impressively. "You must do whatever those mysterious animals told you to do. I cannot help you. You must do those things alone. I have heard my father say that."

"It is true," agreed Running Fox. "If you try to help me it might do great harm."

As the lads were still well within the northern boundary of the vast Delaware hunting grounds, they had little fear of an immediate encounter with their foes. Still they were cautious, for they knew that such an experience was not impossible,

as both Shawnees and Iroquois frequently invaded that territory to hunt and fish. The Shawnees were a powerful nation living farther to the westward, with whom the Delawares had fought many desperate battles.

The day was about half spent when Running Fox suddenly dropped to his knees, and called excitedly to Spotted Deer. The fresh trail of a bear crossed a narrow strip of gravelly beach and disappeared into the woods. The tracks were huge, and it was evident that the animal had only recently crossed the river.

"See, here is the track of Machque," said Running Fox, as he measured the footprints with his hands. "He must be very big, and very fierce. He cannot be far off. I will follow his trail, and try to kill him. Spotted Deer, you must wait until I come back. Perhaps it will take a long time to do this thing, but you must wait. It is the only thing to do."

"I would like to go with you, but I believe it would be bad," declared Spotted Deer. "You must do as it appeared in your dream. I will wait."

A moment afterward Running Fox followed the tracks into the forest. The lad had been well trained in the art of hunting by his father, and his sharp eyes had little difficulty in keeping the trail. It led him along the side of a rocky hillside, and then down into the bushy tangle of a dark spruce swamp. The footprints looked very fresh, and Running Fox moved forward as noiselessly as a lynx. He stopped after every few strides to look, and listen and sniff. He had never killed a bear but he had heard the hunters tell many stories about that crafty beast, and he knew that it was only by using the utmost caution that he could hope to get within bow-shot. He crossed the swamp without coming in sight of his quarry, and followed the tracks over the top of another rocky hill. As he was climbing carefully toward the summit he came upon an ant-hill that had been dug open by the bear. The demoralized ants were still rushing frantically over the wreck of their lodge. On the other side of the hill Running Fox lost the trail on a steep ledge of smooth gray rock. Circling carefully around the ledge he finally picked up the tracks leading down into a narrow

ravine that penetrated far back into the hills. As the sides of the gully were covered with blueberry bushes, the young Delaware understood why the bear had chosen that route. He saw many crushed and uprooted plants which told him that the bear was feeding upon the berries. Running Fox hurried along the ravine in the hope of overtaking the bear at its feast, but although the trail seemed continually to grow fresher the eager young hunter was unable to get within sight of his quarry.

The ravine at last led up to a wide grassy plateau closed in on three sides by low hardwood ridges. It looked like an ideal feeding ground for elk and deer, and Running Fox saw several well-trod trails leading through it. Then he saw something more interesting. Far over in the opposite corner of the plateau he discovered some animal lying down. It was beyond bow-shot, and Running Fox began to study how he might approach without being seen. When he had watched some moments he decided that the distant object was either an elk or a deer. As it failed to move he concluded that it was asleep. Then he suddenly thought of the bear tracks. They led directly out

into the open plateau, and toward the mysterious object in the farther corner. Running Fox was perplexed. He knew that what he saw was not the bear. Still he realized that whatever it was it had come there after the bear had passed. The idea did not satisfy him, however, for he told himself that unless the bear had gone by a long time before, the keen nose of an elk or a deer would instantly have found the dreaded scent. In that event neither of those wary creatures would be likely to sleep on the fresh trail of their enemy. Running Fox felt positive that the bear had but recently crossed the plateau, for the grass which had been trodden down was still springing upright. Then the solution flashed into his mind—the animal he saw was dead.

Having come to that decision Running Fox began to look for the bear. He felt quite sure that it was somewhere near the carcass, unless it had discovered him and rushed away. Still he rather doubted that, for the wind was in his favor, and besides he believed that a bear as large as the one he had followed would be in no great hurry to run off. He had often heard his father tell how a bear

would loiter in the vicinity of such a bait for several days, feeding when hunger prompted and sleeping in some nearby thicket between meals. Running Fox also realized that the bear might have been feeding as he approached, and upon catching sight or scent of him had retreated into the woods to watch. In any event he told himself that the first thing to do was to go and examine the bait.

Running Fox made his way cautiously along the edge of the plateau, taking advantage of whatever cover offered itself, and advancing against the wind. When he finally came within bow-shot of the bait he saw that it was an elk. Then he sat down to watch and listen. After he had waited a long time without seeing or hearing anything of the bear, he went forward to examine the elk. It was an old bull that apparently had died from old age. Running Fox was surprised to find that almost one whole side of the animal had already been eaten. He also saw that something had been tearing at the carcass but a short time previously. The grass was well trampled all about the bait, and Running Fox identified the tracks of many different animals. The freshest tracks, however,

were the huge footprints of the bear which he had followed from the river. Running Fox believed that the bear was feeding upon the carcass when it suddenly became aware of his approach, and retreated into the woods. He felt quite certain that it would return, and he determined to conceal himself and watch.

The Delaware found much to interest him as he sat quietly in his hiding place and waited for the bear to return. A flock of crows were the first to appear. They made a great racket as they circled about the elk, and the eyes of the young hunter flashed with anger. He knew from experience that those noisy birds gave warning to all the wild things of the woods, and he feared that their senseless commotion might arouse the suspicions of the bear. They soon flew away, however, and Running Fox felt much relieved. A short time afterward he saw something moving along the edge of the timber at the other end of the plateau. In a few moments he identified it as a deer. He took its appearance for proof that the bear was not at the moment anywhere near. Then, as he watched the wary creature browsing in the shadow of the

woods, he heard soft, stealthy footfalls directly behind him. Fitting an arrow to his bow, Running Fox turned in time to find himself facing a large red fox. Before the surprised creature could bound to safety the expert young Delaware sent his arrow through its heart.

Recalling the advice of the medicine-fox which had appeared in his dream, Running Fox crawled noiselessly through the brush, and cut the ears from his victim. He saw that the fox was very old, as its teeth were worn almost to the gums. The discovery filled him with joy, for he felt sure that by carrying the ears of that wise old chief he would become as sharp and crafty himself.

Then for a long time nothing more appeared, and Running Fox began to grow restless. The day was almost at an end, and he feared that Spotted Deer would become impatient. Still he had no thought of leaving the plateau, and was determined to spend the night there if the bear failed to appear before dark. At sunset, however, he heard some large animal moving through the woods. It sounded too heavy for a deer, and too noisy for an elk, so that Running Fox believed it must be

the bear. His heart bounded at the thought. He had heard many stories about thrilling battles with those great beasts of the wilderness, and he hoped that he, too, might experience such an adventure. Then, as the sounds drew nearer, all else was forgotten as the eager lad hurriedly fitted an arrow to his bow, and fixed his eyes on the edge of the woods.

Running Fox was not kept long in suspense. In a few moments he saw the bushes swaying, and the next instant a bear walked into the open. It was not the huge creature which Running Fox had pictured in his mind, but his disappointment soon gave way to surprise as two half-grown cubs immediately followed their mother from the woods. All three animals soon walked within range, but the bewildered young hunter withheld his arrow. He feared to kill the mother bear and her young lest he should offend the great medicine-bear which had appeared in his dream. Besides, he told himself that a warrior could scarcely boast of such a feat. He watched, therefore, while the old bear led her cubs to the carcass of the elk, and began to feed.

Some time later when the mother bear raised her head and sniffed the air, Running Fox instantly became alert. As the old bear continued to watch the woods, the lad began to hope that the animal he had followed might be returning. However, the bear soon resumed feeding, and Running Fox believed that he was again doomed to disappointment. At that very moment, however, a stick cracked over in the spot toward which the mother bear had been looking. She again raised her head and sniffed. Then she began to growl. Running Fox watched anxiously. For some moments all was still, but the bear continued to growl, and sniff suspiciously. Then a great black object appeared at the edge of the woods. Running Fox knew at once that it was the bear he had trailed from the river. As it walked slowly into the open and he saw how big it was he could scarcely believe his eyes. It seemed to be very fierce, for it approached the bait growling and snapping its jaws. As it drew near Running Fox saw a round white spot, half as large as his hand, directly behind its shoulder. It immediately fired the imagination of the superstitious young Delaware. He believed

that Getanittowit had placed that mark upon the bear to guide the Delaware arrow.

Running Fox had been so absorbed in watching the approach of the giant that for the moment he had forgotten all about the mother bear and her cubs. Now he heard her growling and gnashing her teeth. He had expected to see her dash away at the first sight of the intruder, but she showed no such intention. Instead she gave every evidence of disputing the right of ownership which the big bear apparently intended to assert. Running Fox looked upon her with admiration as she stood there snapping her jaws, and growling defiance at the huge brute that threatened her. For a few moments the big bear stood watching her in surprise. He seemed puzzled by her unexpected show of resistance. Then it roused his fighting spirit, and he rushed forward roaring furiously.

As the cubs dashed for the timber, squealing with terror, the mother bear prepared to meet the attack. She appeared scarcely more than half the size of the monster that had attacked her, and yet she seemed quite as fierce and eager to fight as he. When the big bear came within range she rushed

at him, and he reared and attempted to fall upon her. She was too quick, however, and as he crashed down she rushed in and closed her jaws upon a hind leg. Wheeling with the agility of a panther, he snapped viciously at her neck, but she released her hold and jumped back in time to save herself. Then he rushed at her in blind fury, and knocked her off her feet. Turning upon her back, she clawed him like a wildcat. Snarling, biting and tearing, the maddened beasts fought with a fury that meant destruction to the vanquished. It soon became evident that the mother bear was doomed to defeat. The tremendous bulk and strength of her antagonist made him invincible. He was inflicting terrible punishment upon his courageous foe, and it seemed only a matter of moments before he would have her completely at his mercy.

However, it was at that stage of the encounter that Running Fox joined in the fray. Completely carried away by the fierceness of the fight, the lad jumped to his feet and shot his arrow at the big bear. In his excitement, however, he missed his aim, and the arrow struck about a hand-width above the white patch behind the shoulder. The

bear twisted about and snapped off the shaft close to its body. Then both bears caught sight of him, and immediately ceased fighting. For a moment, as they stood glaring at him and snarling, it looked as if they intended to unite in attacking their common enemy. Then, as Running Fox drove a second arrow into the body of the giant, the latter rushed forward alone. At that instant the cubs began whimpering at the edge of the forest, and the mother bear, weak and suffering from a score of ugly wounds, ambled painfully off to join them.

As the great bear came roaring down upon him the young Delaware realized that he was fighting for his life, and the thought steadied him. Twice more he sent his arrows tearing into the great muscular body, but they seemed to have little effect. The infuriated bear stopped just long enough to snap at the feathered shafts, and then it made a final rush at its foe. However, during that momentary delay Running Fox had fitted another arrow to his bow. He held it until the bear was only a few paces away, and then, as it rose unsteadily upon its hind legs, he uttered the shrill Delaware war-cry and drove the arrow deep be-

tween its fore legs. The giant crashed to the ground, and the excited lad immediately rushed forward to strike it with his war-club. At that moment, however, the bear suddenly recovered and struggled to its feet. The surprised young hunter almost collided with it. It struck savagely at him, but he jumped aside, and shot an arrow into the fatal mark behind the shoulder. It finished the fight. The bear sank slowly to the ground, and lay still. This time, however, Running Fox was more cautious, and he remained at a safe distance until the last signs of life had vanished. Then he ran eagerly forward and began to cut off the great curved claws.

By the time Running Fox had finished his task darkness had already fallen, and as he was a considerable distance from the river he determined to remain where he was until daylight. Then he suddenly thought of the wounded mother bear. He feared that she was too badly hurt to travel far away, and he had already seen enough of her temper to make him cautious about risking an encounter in the dark. He left the plateau, therefore, and spent the night farther down the ravine.

CHAPTER IV

IN THE GRIP OF THE RAPIDS

THE sun was already above the tree-tops when Running Fox finally rejoined Spotted Deer at the river. They seated themselves on a fallen tree, and Running Fox showed his trophies and described his encounter with the bear. When Spotted Deer heard about the peculiar white patch on the bear's shoulder he suggested that it might have been caused by a former arrow wound. Running Fox scoffed at the idea, however, and insisted that the mark had been placed there by Getanittowit.

"Yes, I believe that must be the way of it," Spotted Deer agreed, finally.

Running Fox said that they must eat the heart of the bear to comply with the instructions which he had received in his dream. They kindled a tiny fire, and broiled the meat on a willow branch. Then, after Running Fox had sung several medicine-songs to pacify the spirit of the bear, the

superstitious young warriors divided the precious trophy and ate it with solemn ceremony.

"Now I will tell you something," said Spotted Deer. "After you went away I began to look around. I walked along beside the water. Pretty soon I heard a loud noise. Then I came to a place where the water goes very fast. It makes a great noise and jumps up and down. Yes, it looks very mad. I do not like that place. I believe the Bad Water Spirits live there. I have heard my father tell about them. He says that they are very fierce, and are always fighting down there under the water. Yes, that is what makes the commotion. My father has told me that when any one falls into such a place he is broken against the rocks, and eaten by those Bad Water Spirits."

"Yes, that is so, I have heard about it," declared Running Fox.

"Well, I stood there a long time watching that place," continued Spotted Deer. "Then I went ahead. Pretty soon I saw a long strip of woods out there in the middle of the water. I heard many birds singing in the trees, and I stopped to listen. Then I saw some big rocks sticking out of

the water. As I was looking at them I saw a very big fish jumping along between the rocks and the woods. Pretty soon I saw another. My eyes told me that it was Schawanammek, the great sturgeon. Well, I kept watching and I saw many of those big fish passing along. Then I saw how they came to be in that place. The water was very swift all around that strip of land, but between the rocks and the woods it was not so bad. Well, when I saw those big fish I wanted to spear some of them with my arrows. I said, 'Hi, I will swim out to that place and kill some of those fish.' Then I saw how swift the water was, and I heard the noise of that bad place below. Well, I began to think about it. I said, 'I will wait until Running Fox comes back, and then we will talk about it.' Now we will go and see it."

"Yes, let us go," proposed Running Fox, as his eyes lighted with enthusiasm.

As the lads hurried along the river they soon heard the sullen roar of the rapids, and their hearts bounded at the sound. Then they came upon the long stretch of tossing white-caps, and they stopped and looked with superstitious awe upon the wild

tumult of the waters. It was a terrifying spectacle. As Spotted Deer had said, the river appeared to have been roused into a fury. It raged past in great surging waves that crashed against the rocks and sent drenching showers of spray high into the air. In the calmer reaches the water whirled down into seething black pools which sucked down into their dismal depths whatever the torrent tossed into them. The Delawares shuddered as they looked upon them, for they seemed like doors to that weird underwater world where the Bad Water Spirits were supposed to dwell.

"That is a bad place," Running Fox said, solemnly.

"Come, let us hurry away," proposed Spotted Deer.

A short distance beyond the head of the rapids they came opposite the wooded island which Spotted Deer had described. They had not watched it many moments before they saw a great fish jump from the water between the rocks and the shore.

"See, there is Schawanammek!" Spotted Deer cried, excitedly.

"Yes, I saw him," replied Running Fox. "Look, there goes another."

They watched several large sturgeon fight their way through the narrow channel that separated the rocks from the island.

"Well, now you see how it is," said Spotted Deer. "Do you feel strong enough to swim out there and kill some of those fish?"

For some moments Running Fox continued to study the water in silence. The river was smooth but swift at that spot, and the head of the rapids was dangerously near. Their angry roar sounded an ominous warning, and Running Fox hesitated. He realized that the adventure was filled with peril, and wondered whether he ought to risk himself for the mere sport of killing Schawanammek. It seemed foolhardy for one bound upon an important mission to take unnecessary chances. However, as the great fish continued to show themselves Running Fox began to waver. Then he suddenly realized that Spotted Deer was awaiting his decision, and the latter's proposal instantly seemed like a challenge. Running Fox believed that Spotted Deer might be testing his courage. The possi-

bility made him reckless. Under those circumstances he would have tried to reach the island even though he knew that the attempt was certain to cost him his life.

"Spotted Deer, I am going to swim out to that place, and kill some of those fish," declared Running Fox. "Will you go with me?"

"Yes, I will go," Spotted Deer replied, quietly.

"It will be a hard thing to do," Running Fox warned him. "That water is very strong. It will carry us along very fast. We must go farther ahead, before we start to swim. If we get to that place perhaps we cannot get away again. I do not know how it will be. Well, I am going to do this thing no matter how it comes out."

They walked along the shore until they were several bow-shots above the island. Then, after they had concealed their robes and moccasins in the bushes, they tied their bows and arrow-cases on their backs and waded into the water. As it reached their knees they began to feel its strength. Each stride forward made it more difficult to remain upon their feet. When they had waded in

waist-deep they threw themselves forward and began to swim.

Once started, the lads swam boldly toward the middle of the river. Each stroke took them into swifter water, and they soon realized the seriousness of their adventure. Still they had no thought of turning back. The river swept them along at startling speed, and they swam desperately to get in line with the island. As they neared it they were dismayed to see great boulders directly ahead of them. They knew that unless they could get beyond them they would be swept against them and destroyed.

"Come, we must swim harder," cried Running Fox.

They redoubled their efforts. Every moment was precious. Running Fox was the stronger swimmer, and he began to fear for Spotted Deer who was several bow-lengths behind him. However, Spotted Deer saw his peril, and was struggling desperately to place himself beyond the path of the boulders. At last his efforts were successful, and he followed Running Fox to the head of the island. They found a shallow place where

they managed to get upon their feet and scramble safely to the shore.

"Hi, that was a hard fight," panted Spotted Deer, as they sat down to recover from their exertions.

"Spotted Deer, I see that we have done a foolish thing," Running Fox said, soberly.

"Are you thinking about those Bad Water Spirits?" inquired Spotted Deer, as he looked toward the rapids.

"No, I am not thinking about those mysterious people, but I believe we have got ourselves into a trap," declared Running Fox. "It was a hard fight to get to this place, but it will be harder to get away."

The idea sobered them. For the moment they forgot all about Schawanammek, the great sturgeon. As they watched the river sweeping past them, and heard the angry challenge of the rapids, they suddenly realized that they had placed themselves in a serious predicament.

"Well, we have come here to kill some of those big fish," said Running Fox, attempting to make light of the adventure.

"Yes, let us go and find them," proposed Spotted Deer.

They moved carefully along the wooded shore of the island until they reached the narrow channel between the island and the boulders. The water was comparatively quiet at that place, and they were able to wade out to a large flat-topped rock upon which they seated themselves to watch for sturgeon. As they waited for the first big fish to appear they cast many uneasy glances toward the rapids. They appeared uncomfortably near the lower end of the island. The noise seemed much louder. The lads wondered whether they had underestimated the distance between the island and that long stretch of white-crested waves. Then a sturgeon entered the narrow channel, and all else was forgotten.

"Hi, here comes Schawanammek!" cried Spotted Deer, as he hastily prepared his bow.

As the great fish swam past the rock Spotted Deer drove his arrow into it. It floundered helplessly for a moment or so, and Running Fox also sent an arrow into its body. Then, to the surprise of the excited young Delawares, the sturgeon

turned and flashed down the channel with the current. A few moments afterward they saw it drifting helplessly into the rapids.

"That is bad," said Spotted Deer. "We have lost two good arrows, and Schawanammek has fooled us."

"Well, we have sent some good food to Gunammachk, the otter," laughed Running Fox.

It was some time before another sturgeon appeared, and that, too, would have been swept away by the river if Running Fox had not jumped recklessly into the water and seized it. Aided by Spotted Deer he dragged it to the island, and pulled it into the bushes.

"Well, we have killed Schawanammek," said Spotted Deer. "Now we must eat some of his flesh. Then we will be able to swim through the bad places like he does."

"Yes, I believe it will be a good thing to do," agreed Running Fox.

Having left their fire-sticks with their robes, the lads were compelled to eat the fish raw. Then they began to think about leaving the island. They

had no desire to waste more arrows on such easy game.

"Now we must get away from here," said Running Fox.

"I see that it will be a hard thing to do," declared Spotted Deer. "I believe I was very foolish to talk about coming here. Now I have got you into a bad place. I do not like that."

"Spotted Deer, I came here because I wanted to show you that I was not afraid. It was a foolish thing to do. Perhaps those Bad Water Spirits will kill us. Then our people will say, 'Running Fox was not sharp enough to escape from the Mohawks.' I am sorry I came here."

They walked to the head of the island, and looked longingly toward the forest on the river bank. It seemed a long ways off, and the water looked very swift. Their task was to reach the shore before the current carried them into the rapids. They knew that to do that they would have to swim even harder and faster than they swam to reach the island. Running Fox believed that he might be equal to the task, but he had grave misgivings about Spotted Deer. The latter, however, felt

quite as confident as Running Fox. Before they entered the water Running Fox sang several of the medicine-songs which old Sky Dog had taught him for just such emergencies. Then, having asked Getanittowit to help them, the lads began their perilous battle with the river.

It was impossible to make any headway directly against the current, and the lads swam at a sharp angle but with their faces turned up the river. They had not gone far, however, before they saw that they were exhausting themselves without gaining enough to make the effort worth while. Then Running Fox turned and swam directly across the current. He found himself sweeping rapidly down the river, and he had grave doubts of reaching the shore before he drifted into the rapids. Each moment he heard their angry roar growing louder in his ears, and it nerved him to greater efforts. Calling upon Spotted Deer to increase his exertions Running Fox began a furious fight against the current. Strive as he might, however, he was unable to stay his mad flight down the river. The rapids were now only half as far away as they were when he started, and Running Fox

began to lose heart. He had gone only a third of the distance between the shore and the island and each bow-length he drifted found him in rougher water. It suddenly dawned on him that it would be impossible to escape the rapids. For a moment the thought overwhelmed him, and he was on the point of surrendering. Then he heard a wild despairing cry behind him. Looking over his shoulder, he saw Spotted Deer turning back toward the the island. Running Fox knew at once that the exhausted lad would never reach his goal. Twisting about he swam with the current to intercept Spotted Deer in his wild plunge down the river.

"Come, Spotted Deer, show your courage!" cried Running Fox.

The challenge roused Spotted Deer to heroic efforts. He fought just long enough to enable Running Fox to get in line with him, and then he ceased struggling.

"Come, follow me!" shouted Running Fox. "Do not waste yourself. Let the water carry you. Watch out for the bad places."

A moment later they were sweeping toward the rapids. Running Fox picked the route, and Spot-

ted Deer tried to follow him. There was little chance to swim. All they could do was to keep themselves afloat, and try to dodge the rocks and whirlpools. It was a desperate chance, and the odds were all against them. However, it was the only chance for life and Running Fox had decided to take it. When they reached the head of the rapids they shot forward into a stifling smother of white-caps. Then they swirled down through the raging inferno of water at terrific speed. Monster waves surged over them, huge boulders flashed by within bow-length. Running Fox found it impossible to pick a route, and, terrified and bewildered, he confined his efforts to keeping his head above the surface and left the rest to chance. As for Spotted Deer, he lost sight of his companion as soon as they entered the rapids, and he, too, thought only of keeping from going down into the clutches of the Bad Water Spirits. Gasping, choking and struggling, the unfortunate lads were carried down the river. Once Running Fox crashed into a boulder, but fortunately it was a glancing blow and he escaped with nothing more serious than bruises. Spotted Deer drifted into one of

the sucking black pools, and in some miraculous manner was whirled around the edge and thrown back into the current. There seemed no hope that either of the swimmers would escape with his life.

Running Fox, however, finally reached the end of the rapids alive. When he found himself afloat in calm water he could scarcely believe his good fortune. His first thought was for Spotted Deer. He was nowhere in sight. What had become of him? There seemed but one answer. He had been pulled down by the Bad Water Spirits. Running Fox looked toward the rapids, and his eyes glowed savagely. Then he saw something bobbing down through the waves, and a great hope entered his heart.

"Fight, Spotted Deer! Fight! I am here to help you!" screamed Running Fox, as he saw the form of his friend sweeping toward the end of the rapids.

His words were useless, however, for Spotted Deer could not hear them. As his limp body finally shot into the still water and sank from sight, Running Fox dove after it and brought him to the surface. Then he swam painfully to the

shore with him, and placed him tenderly on the beach. There was an ugly wound over his eye, and his limbs were bruised and swollen. Running Fox himself was bloody and bruised, but he gave no thought to his wounds. Bending frantically over his friend he worked feverishly to expel the water from his lungs. He had seen his people restore more than one unfortunate swimmer, and he had hopes of bringing Spotted Deer back to life. However, his efforts seemed in vain and he called hysterically upon Getanittowit for aid.

"O Getanittowit, see what the Bad Water Spirits have done," he cried. "O Getanittowit, take pity on me, and give me back my brother, Spotted Deer. See, Getanittowit, he is sleeping. O Getanittowit, take pity on him and wake him up."

Then he worked with renewed energy. Still Spotted Deer showed no signs of life. Running Fox was on the verge of collapse. He realized that he would soon be unable to continue his efforts. The thought roused him. Then, when he had given up hope, Spotted Deer sighed and opened his eyes. He stared stupidly at Running Fox, and again lapsed into unconsciousness. Still he was

alive, and that was sufficient for Running Fox. His strength returned, and he continued his exertions until Spotted Deer regained consciousness. Then, as the latter smiled and whispered his name, Running Fox fell exhausted beside him.

CHAPTER V

WOLVES

THE following day found the Delawares too stiff and sore from their battle with the rapids to proceed with their journey. They limped as far as the spot where they had hidden their robes, and made no attempt to go farther. Besides, they had lost a number of their arrows in the river, and they spent the day making others to replace them. Toward evening as Running Fox was stalking several grouse that had alighted in a tree, he suddenly came upon a number of tracks that immediately claimed his attention. Dropping to his knees he examined them with great care. Then he rose and hastened to tell Spotted Deer, whom he had left resting upon a couch of hemlock boughs.

"Spotted Deer, if you feel strong enough you must rise and follow me," said Running Fox. "I have found something to show you."

"I will go," declared Spotted Deer, rising stiffly to his feet.

They soon reached the spot where Running Fox had discovered the tracks, and Spotted Deer examined them with much interest.

"This is strange," he said after a few moments. "These tracks look like the tracks of big dogs. How did they get here? Are we near a camp?"

"No, Spotted Deer, these are not dog tracks," said Running Fox. "That is what I took them for when I first saw them. Then I knew different. These are the tracks of Timmeu, the wolf."

"It is true," replied Spotted Deer.

They noted that the tracks were several days old, and that the trail turned toward the north. It was also apparent that there had been a goodly number of wolves, for the lads saw tracks of various sizes. That night as they sat beside a small fire broiling the grouse which Running Fox had killed their thoughts turned to the wolf pack.

"I have heard the hunters tell about those wolves," said Running Fox. "They are very large and very fierce. They have fought with

many of our people. My father killed some of them when he was hunting along the river."

"Why are they down in this country?" inquired Spotted Deer. "This is not the time for them to come down here. I have heard the hunters say that in the time of growing things they travel far beyond the country of the Mohawks."

"What you say is so," replied Running Fox. "When it is cold our people have found them down near our village. I do not know how they come to be here now."

"Perhaps we shall see them," Spotted Deer suggested, hopefully.

"No, I do not believe it," said Running Fox.

The next day they resumed their journey at daylight. They had quite recovered from their trip through the rapids, and excepting a few minor cuts and bruises showed little evidence of the rough treatment which they had received from the river. They felt that they had escaped with a very light penalty for their foolishness, and they were very grateful to Getanittowit. However, they agreed that they would be more careful in the future.

"Pretty soon we will come to dangerous coun-

try," said Spotted Deer, as they continued up the river.

"Yes, we must keep a sharp watch for our enemies," replied Running Fox.

They traveled through a splendid forest of massive oaks and chestnuts, and they saw many signs of game. At one place they again saw wolf tracks, but they were many days old and the lads gave them little thought. Then they came upon a well-worn trail leading away from the river, and as it showed fresh deer tracks they determined to follow it. It soon led them to a shallow pool in the center of an open marshy swale. From the numberless footprints, and the manner in which the ground had been pawed, they knew at once that the place was a natural salt-lick. They also knew that animals of all sorts frequented such places, and as the day was less than half spent they determined to spend some time watching for game.

"Perhaps we shall see some of the creatures that appeared in my dream," said Running Fox.

The wish was soon gratified, for they had barely concealed themselves at the edge of the woods when they heard something approaching. They watched

closely, and in a few moments a splendid buck appeared on the border of the marsh.

"Achtu," whispered Spotted Deer.

"Sh," cautioned Running Fox, as he prepared an arrow.

The wind was in their favor, and they had little fear of being discovered. The deer made a splendid picture as it stood silhouetted against the vivid green background of the forest. It was a big, graceful creature, with horns still sheathed in the soft moss-like covering which protects them until they complete their growth in the autumn. The buck spent some moments listening, and sniffing for signs of danger. Then, satisfied that all was well, he started toward the pool. At that moment, however, the wind veered and brought him the danger scent. For one fleeting instant he halted with his head raised in alarm. Then, having located the danger, he wheeled and sprang toward shelter. Two arrows sped after him. One flew high and stuck in a sapling, but the other buried itself in his side. Then with a great bound he disappeared into the woods. The lads heard

him crashing away in mad flight, and they looked at each other with disgust.

"That was bad work," said Running Fox. "I was not ready. The wind fooled us."

"My arrow is sticking in that tree," laughed Spotted Deer.

"Well, we must follow him," declared Running Fox. "My arrow struck too far back, but perhaps it will make him lie down."

They hastened to the spot where the buck had disappeared, and found a number of large red splashes upon the leaves. It was evident that the deer had been hard hit, and they started hopefully on the trail. The buck was traveling in great bounds, and bleeding freely. It was not long, however, before they noticed that he was slackening his speed.

"We will soon come up with him," said Running Fox.

Both lads were well experienced in the art of deer hunting, and they instantly recognized the unmistakable signs that promised an early collapse. They hurried along the trail, therefore, with high hopes of overtaking their quarry before the end

of the day. The tracks led them into a vast hemlock swamp, and they advanced with great caution, for it looked like an ideal hiding place for the wounded buck. They soon saw that the deer had begun to walk, and at one place they saw that it had stopped as if preparing to lie down. It had gone on, however, and the lads hurried after it, keeping a sharp watch on all sides lest it should suddenly spring from cover and escape. As they penetrated into the gloomy depths of the swamp they saw many fresh tracks of lynx, and foxes and rabbits, but they paid little attention to them for they knew from experience that it was only by constant vigilance that they could hope to overtake and surprise the animal they sought.

"See, he is growing weak," said Running Fox, as he pointed to a place in the trail which indicated that the buck had stumbled awkwardly over a log that lay in his path.

Then they saw him lying under a spruce a short distance ahead of them. The buck saw them at the same instant, and struggled to his feet. Running Fox shot his arrow and scored another hit, but as Spotted Deer released his bow-string the

buck dashed between the trees and vanished from sight.

"He will not run so far this time," prophesied Running Fox.

The trail turned off at a sharp angle, and soon brought them to the edge of the swamp. They followed it through the woods to a pretty woodland stream, and there they found the buck lying dead beside the water.

"Well, I have done what the great medicine deer told me to do," said Running Fox.

"It is good," replied Spotted Deer.

When they finished skinning and quartering the deer the twilight shadows were falling upon the forest, and they decided to spend the night beside the stream. As they were some distance from the river, they believed it might be safe to make a tiny fire and dry some of the meat to take with them. They worked at the task until long after darkness had fallen. Then, as they wrapped themselves in their robes, and were preparing to sleep, Spotted Deer suddenly sat up and listened anxiously.

"What is that?" he asked Running Fox.

For a moment or so they heard only the gentle

murmuring of the breeze through the tree-tops. Then, far away in the night, they heard a sound that thrilled them. It was the hunting cry of the wolf-pack. They had heard it more than once in the winter near the Delaware village, and they recognized it immediately.

"Timmeu has found the blood trail," said Runing Fox.

The sounds came from somewhere beyond the swamp, and the lads had little doubt that the wolves were following the trail of the wounded buck. The thought stirred them, for they believed that they were about to have an encounter with the savage brutes about which they had heard so many wonderful tales. The sounds soon united in a wild babel that grew louder and more distinct each moment.

"They are coming fast," said Spotted Deer.

"Well, we will wait for them," declared Running Fox. "Come, we will bring in some brush for the fire, so that we can see them."

They hurried to gather several armfuls of dry wood. Then they raked together the embers of their fire, and fanned them into a flame. By that

time it was evident that the wolves were almost through the swamp. They were making a great din, and it seemed as if there were many animals in the pack. The eyes of the Delawares flashed as the wild baying drew nearer.

"Now they are getting close," cried Spotted Deer.

"Yes, they have come out of the swamp," replied Running Fox.

The lads had heard enough about that famous pack to feel sure that they would be attacked. Still the possibility failed to alarm them. They felt confident that they would be able to defend themselves, and they were eager for the fight. Then, as they waited anxiously for the wolves to appear, the commotion suddenly ceased.

"Perhaps the fire has frightened them away," Spotted Deer said, regretfully.

"No, I do not believe it," replied Running Fox. "Timmeu is very cautious. Perhaps they saw our fire. Perhaps they found the man scent. They are sneaking up to have a look at us. I have heard my father tell how they do that. We must keep a sharp watch."

They listened anxiously, and peered eagerly into the darkness in the hope of locating the wolves. They felt quite certain that the wily brutes were close at hand endeavoring to learn the strength of their enemies before exposing themselves. For a long time, however, the alert young hunters could find no evidence of them. Then they heard a snarl almost in front of them. A moment afterward a pair of shining green eyes flashed in the darkness. The next instant they were gone.

"Come, we must put some brush on the fire," said Running Fox.

As the flames flared up and threw a circle of yellow light some distance into the woods, the lads fitted arrows to their bows and watched for a chance at the wolves. However, it appeared that those crafty beasts were wise enough to keep beyond the glow. The Delawares heard them trotting about through the undergrowth, but they were unable to see them. The caution displayed by the wolves seemed like cowardice to the eager lads who waited impatiently for them to attack, and they began to doubt some of the stories they had heard concerning their ferocity.

"These animals are not brave," sneered Spotted Deer. "Come, let us run out and chase them away."

"That would be a foolish thing to do," cautioned Running Fox. "We must not take any chances. I believe what we have heard is true. Perhaps they are getting ready to make a big fight. Listen. Do you hear that? It is their war-cry. Now we must be ready."

A long, quavering howl sounded through the night. It was the rallying cry, and it was immediately answered by a wild din from the pack. It was evident that the wolves were growing bolder. They trotted about at the edge of the firelight, and the lads caught fleeting glimpses of dim, shadowy forms slinking through the shadows.

"Perhaps they will get brave enough to fight," laughed Spotted Deer.

"They will fight," Running Fox assured him.

The carcass of the deer was between the lads and the wolves, and it appeared that the latter were preparing to fight for possession of it. Still, it was some time before they grew bold enough to expose themselves in the firelight. At last, how-

ever, one great wolf more reckless than its companions rushed toward the prize. As it came into the glow Spotted Deer shot his arrow, and the wolf rolled into the bushes, howling dismally. Elated at his success, Spotted Deer raised his voice in the Delaware war-cry.

"That was a bad thing to do," said Running Fox. "Perhaps that will reach the ears of an enemy."

"It is true, Running Fox, I was very foolish," Spotted Deer acknowledged, guiltily.

At that instant the wolves charged in a body, and the lads saw that they would have all the fighting they desired. They killed several of the leaders, and for a moment the others hesitated. Then they divided and formed a circle, and the Delawares realized that they had been surrounded. Once roused to the attack, the wolves showed little fear, and the lads soon found themselves engaged in a desperate encounter. Standing back to back to prevent being attacked from the rear, they fought furiously to keep the ferocious animals from reaching them. More than one wolf was stopped in mid-air as it leaped forward to drag

them to the ground. Once Running Fox was compelled to use his war-club to crush the skull of a wolf that had eluded his arrow. A moment later he heard a warning cry from Spotted Deer, and wheeling about he saw the latter borne to earth by a huge wolf that had two arrows sticking in its side. Running Fox drove a third arrow into the fatal spot behind the shoulder, and Spotted Deer leaped to his feet unharmed. Then the wolves suddenly became demoralized, and retreated into the shadows. Spotted Deer was eager to follow them, but Running Fox cautioned against it.

"We have had a hard fight, but we have come out of it," said Running Fox. "If we follow the wolves into the darkness we may be torn to pieces."

"Perhaps that is so," agreed Spotted Deer.

They piled more brush on the fire, and kept a sharp watch for another attack. However, as the time passed and the wolves failed to appear, the lads believed that they had skulked off. Still it was a long time before they dared to leave the fire to recover their arrows from the bodies of the wolves they had killed. While they were engaged in the task they heard savage snarls coming from

the darkness, and saw the flash of angry eyes. They realized, therefore, that they were in constant danger of attack by the wounded wolves that had been unable to retreat with the pack.

"This is dangerous work," said Running Fox. "I believe the best thing to do would be to wait until the light comes."

He had barely uttered the warning, however, when a great black form rushed from behind a rock and attacked him. It snapped savagely at his legs, but he jumped aside in time to avoid the cruel white fangs. Then he wheeled at bay. He saw the hateful green eyes glaring at him through the night, and he aimed his arrow a short distance below them. As he released the bow-string the wolf attempted to spring at him, but the arrow plunged deep into its chest and ended its life. After that narrow escape the lads decided to withdraw to the fire. They gathered enough wood to last them through the night, and planned to take turns watching until daylight.

CHAPTER VI

A PROWLER IN THE DARK

THE night passed without further attack, and at dawn the lads scouted carefully about the scene of the battle and found the bodies of twelve large timber wolves. They found another wounded wolf hiding under the top of a fallen tree, and they rushed upon it and killed it with their war-clubs. Well pleased with their victory, the young Delawares spent some time chanting war-songs and dancing about the bodies of their victims. Then they broke off the tusks of the largest wolves as trophies to be proudly exhibited when they finally returned to the Delaware village.

On the way back to the river Running Fox saw a small dark animal bounding along ahead of him. He immediately ran in pursuit of it, and as it flashed up the trunk of a tree he saw that it was, as he had guessed, a black squirrel. The squirrel hid on one side of the tree, and as Running Fox

moved cautiously about the tree-trunk the crafty little creature moved with him, so that he was unable to surprise it. At last, however, Running Fox took his bow and stirred the leaves on the opposite side of the tree. It was an old hunting trick which he had learned from his father, and it proved entirely successful. Thinking that its pursuer was coming around on that side the bewildered squirrel edged around in full view of Running Fox. A moment afterward it fell at his feet with an arrow through its body.

"Well, Wisawanik knows how to hide, but I fooled him," laughed Running Fox, as he held up the prize. "See, Spotted Deer, I have killed a chief who wears the black robe. Yes, I have done what the medicine creatures told me to do."

Running Fox removed the black pelt with great care, and fastened it to his belt. Then they continued toward the river. As they neared the water they climbed to the top of a hardwood ridge to reconnoiter. They knew that they were almost at the end of the Delaware hunting grounds, and the thought made them cautious.

"Pretty soon we will enter the country of our

enemies," said Running Fox. "Many of our people have been killed in that country. We must be very watchful."

"We will be as sharp as Woakus, the fox," replied Spotted Deer.

They were able to see a long way up and down the river from the top of the ridge, and they studied the water with great care. However, as they failed to discover anything to arouse their suspicions, they soon resumed their way into the north. The day was more than half gone when Running Fox suddenly stopped, and pointed to a high rocky cliff on the opposite side of the river, and then to a massive dead pine directly ahead of them.

"Do you see that high rocky place over there?" he inquired, turning to Spotted Deer.

"Yes, I see it," replied Spotted Deer.

"Do you see that big tree ahead of us?"

"Yes, I see it."

"Well, we have reached the beginning of the great Iroquois hunting grounds," declared Running Fox. "It begins over there on that side where you see those rocks, and it begins on this

side where you see that big tree ahead of us. Do you know anything about those rocks?''

''No, I do not know about them,'' replied Spotted Deer.

''Well, I will tell you about something that happened there,'' said Running Fox. ''I will tell it just as my father told it to me. Our people call that place Laktschellan, which means the-jumping-over-place. Now I will tell you how it got that name. A long time ago a Delaware hunter was chased up on those rocks by some Mohawks. Well, when they saw him up there they began to laugh because they thought he could not get away. Pretty soon they heard him calling down to them. He told them that he was going to jump down into the water. Well, when they heard that they began to laugh some more, because they thought he would surely be killed. Then some of the Mohawks began to climb up the rocks. When the Delaware saw them coming he gave a loud shout and jumped away from the rocks. He made a great noise when he fell into the water, and a white cloud flew high up into the air. Well, the Mohawks began to watch the water. They watched

a long time, but he never appeared. Then they thought he was dead. Some of them began to jump into the water to find his body. Well, while they were doing that the Delaware was hiding in the bushes a little way off. He was laughing about how he had fooled the Mohawks. He waited there until the Mohawks got tired and went away. Then he ran to the Delaware camp, and told what he had done. The name of that brave man was Striking Hawk, and he lived a very long time ago."

"That is a good thing to know about," declared Spotted Deer. "Whenever I pass that place I will always think about that brave hunter."

A few moments afterwards the lads entered the hunting grounds of their foes. The real war-journey had actually begun. The thought thrilled them. Still they were serious and thoughtful. They knew that many foes lurked in the vast wilderness which they were about to explore, and they realized the difficulty of avoiding them. Besides the Mohawks there were several other tribes of the great Iroquois nation who wandered into that country to hunt and fish with their tribesmen. These visitors were mostly Oneidas and Onondagas,

whose villages were comparatively near the Mohawks, but the fierce Cayugas and the still fiercer Senecas occasionally came from the lakes and mountains far away toward the setting sun. Then there were also the Shawnees, who frequently ventured into the Iroquois country in large numbers. Such an array of enemies might have made the most courageous warrior hesitate about entering that perilous region, and the young Delawares knew that they must keep constantly alert to their danger if they hoped to escape.

The lads continued along the river until near the end of the day, and then they turned deeper into the forest to find a safe hiding place in which to spend the night. They were making their way carefully over a rocky piece of ground covered with blueberry bushes, when they heard a loud buzzing sound close beside them.

"Hi, that is Wischalowe, the Frightener," cried Running Fox.

They recognized the sound as the angry buzzing of a rattlesnake. It seemed to be in a dense thicket of blueberry bushes, The lads realized that they must approach it with caution, for they knew that

its bite was very deadly. Running Fox picked up several stones, and advanced carefully into the thicket. When he came near the sound he stopped and looked for the snake. At last he saw it several bow-lengths ahead of him. It was coiled to strike.

"Hi, Wischalowe, I have found you," cried Running Fox. "You look very ugly. Yes, you are called 'The Frightener.' Well, I am not afraid of you. Your war-cry does not frighten me. I have killed some of your people. Now I am going to kill you. But I am going to give you a chance to fight. Come, let me see how brave you are."

Running Fox advanced directly toward the angry snake. He parted the bushes carefully with his bow, and walked almost within bow-length. Then he stopped, and continued to taunt Wischalowe. However, the rattlesnake made no attempt to strike, and Running Fox tossed one of the stones within a hand-breadth of it. The snake instantly lowered its head and flattened its body against the ground—it was evidently about to strike. Running Fox advanced a step nearer, and the snake

uncoiled two-thirds of its body and struck at him. He saw the ugly open mouth and the deadly fangs as he sprang aside.

"Well, Wischalowe, you are very slow, like an old man," laughed Running Fox. "Yes, I see that you are very mad about it. You are making a great noise. Perhaps it would frighten the women and children. Is that how you got your name? Well, Wischalowe, this will be your last song. Now I am going to kill you."

However, as Running Fox threw the rock the snake struck, and he missed it. Then to his surprise the snake partially coiled and struck again. It was an unexpected maneuver, and the reckless young Delaware barely escaped. He struck savagely with his bow, and hit the reptile a stunning blow behind the head. Before it recovered he stooped and crushed it with his war-club. Then he cut the string of bony scales, or rattles, from the end of its tail.

"Well, that was an easy fight," laughed Running Fox, as he rejoined Spotted Deer. "Wischalowe tried to frighten us, and now I have killed him."

"Wischalowe was foolish," replied Spotted Deer.

At the end of the day they stopped for the night beside a splendid little woodland spring, in the midst of a wonderful forest of towering hemlocks. The trees were so large and stood so close together that perpetual twilight reigned beneath them. Night came swiftly after sunset in that dense stand of timber, and the lads missed the cheery glow of the little camp-fire, for they believed that it would be foolhardy to run the risk of lighting it. They sat close together in the darkness, therefore, conversing in low, guarded tones and listening anxiously at the slightest sound. However, the great wilderness was unusually still, and they heard only the night wind whispering softly in the tree-tops.

"Schawanachen, the warm wind, is singing the sleep song," said Running Fox.

"It is a pretty song," replied Spotted Deer. "Come, we will pile up some of this long grass, and let Schawanachen sing us to sleep."

They gathered several armfuls of the long feathery ferns that grew in great abundance at that spot, and made couches of them. Then they

wrapped themselves in their robes and lay down to sleep.

"Perhaps it would be a good thing for one of us to watch," suggested Running Fox.

"No, I do not believe we are in any danger here," said Spotted Deer. "We have not seen or heard anything to trouble us."

"That is true," agreed Running Fox. "Well, we will not do anything about it."

They had not been long asleep when Running Fox awakened with a feeling that all was not well. He raised himself cautiously upon his elbow, and spent many moments looking and listening for signs of danger. Spotted Deer was slumbering soundly, and Running Fox determined not to awaken him unless he discovered something to verify his uneasiness.

"This is a strange thing," Running Fox whispered to himself. "I do not see anything, and I do not hear anything, but I feel something wrong. I believe we are in some kind of danger. Well, I will watch."

For a long time, however, he found no reason for his suspicions. Still the peculiar premonition

of danger persisted. It troubled him. He believed it was a warning from Getanittowit, and yet he did not know how to interpret it. Then he thought he heard something moving through the ferns. He held his breath to listen, but the silence was unbroken. At last, convinced that his fears were groundless, Running Fox again lay down to sleep. He had barely closed his eyes, however, when he was roused by the same stealthy sound in the ferns.

"Now I know that something is wrong," Running Fox told himself.

As he sat up and stared anxiously into the night he again heard the gentle rustling of the ferns. For a moment he wondered if it might not be the wind. All was still, however, and even the murmurs in the tree-tops had died away. Running Fox felt that he was being watched. A few moments later his suspicions were verified, as a pair of glowing eyes shone from the darkness. Aware that they were threatened by some savage prowler of the wilderness, Running Fox leaned over and touched Spotted Deer.

"Do not make any noise," cautioned Running Fox, as Spotted Deer awakened.

"What has happened?" Spotted Deer inquired, anxiously.

"I do not know what it is, but something is watching us," declared Running Fox. "Yes, I heard it, and I saw its eyes."

"Perhaps the wolves have followed us," whispered Spotted Deer.

"No, it is something different," replied Running Fox. "Listen."

They heard something circling softly about them through the ferns. Then they caught the momentary flash of a pair of eyes. The next instant they vanished, and a twig snapped somewhere within bow-shot.

"I believe it is Timmeau, the wolf," declared Spotted Deer. "Perhaps he has come back to fight us."

"No, it is not Timmeau," replied Running Fox. "The eyes are different, and this thing moves slower."

They heard a low growl, like that of an angry

dog. Then they again saw the weird shining eyes watching them.

"Perhaps some Evil Spirit lives in this place," Spotted Deer suggested, uneasily.

"No, I do not believe it," Running Fox assured him. "I believe it is Quenischquney, the panther. Yes, it is the sound I heard in my dream. Now I will tell you what to do. I will shoot my arrow. Then if Quenischquney jumps in to fight you must send your arrow into him. By that time I will be ready with another arrow."

"I am ready," said Spotted Deer. "See, there are his eyes. He sounds mad."

Running Fox discharged his arrow. They heard it strike, and then a terrifying scream rang through the night. A moment later a long dark form crouched before them. They heard the tail swishing rapidly among the ferns, and read a warning in the flashing eyes.

"Do something!" cried Running Fox, as he prepared another arrow.

Spotted Deer had hesitated an instant too long, and as he released his bow-string the panther sprang. It missed him by less than a bow-length,

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and disappeared into the night. They heard it coughing and snarling, and thrashing about in the ferns. Then it suddenly became quiet.

"It is dead," said Spotted Deer.

"Perhaps," replied Running Fox. "Quenischquney is very cute, we must be careful."

They watched anxiously, but the eyes failed to appear. Then, as the silence continued, Running Fox began to grow uneasy. He feared that the panther might have sneaked away, and the possibility made him reckless.

"I do not like this," he told Spotted Deer. "Perhaps, as you say, Quenischquney is dead. But perhaps he has sneaked away. That would be very bad. I must follow him and kill him. Yes, I must take his claws, and wear them as the mysterious Medicine Creatures told me to do. If I do not obey them something bad may happen to us. Now I am going over there to find out if Quenischquney is dead."

"That is a very dangerous thing to do," protested Spotted Deer.

"Well, I cannot help it," replied Running Fox. "I must not let Quenischquney get away."

"I will go with you," proposed Spotted Deer.

They waited some moments, watching and listening for a clue to the whereabouts of the wounded panther. Then, as the baffling silence continued, they advanced cautiously toward the place where they had last seen the glare of its eyes. They went forward very slowly, about a bow-length apart. It was very dark, and they realized that they must depend more upon their ears than their eyes to warn them of danger. After every third or fourth stride, therefore, they stopped to listen, while they peered anxiously on all sides of them for a tell-tale flash of those ugly green eyes. However, they neither heard or saw anything of the animal they sought.

"I believe that fierce Quenischquney is dead," declared Spotted Deer.

"We must not be too sure," Running Fox warned him.

He had barely finished speaking when they heard a warning growl directly ahead of them. They stopped and watched for a chance to shoot their arrows. The growling continued, and they heard the ferns rustling, but they were unable to locate

the panther. They knew it was close to them, but for some reason they were unable to discover its eyes. For a moment they were puzzled. Then Running Fox guessed the truth.

"I know how it is," he whispered, excitedly. "Quenischquney is crouching down in the high grass. I believe he is getting ready to jump."

"Shall I send an arrow over there where we hear him?" asked Spotted Deer.

Quenischquney himself answered the question, for at that very instant he made his spring, and bore Spotted Deer to the ground. Running Fox saw a long black shadow pass before him, heard a short angry snarl, and then the quick startled voice of Spotted Deer. For an instant the suddenness of the attack bewildered him. He hesitated a moment to recover his wits, and then as Spotted Deer called to him he sprang to his assistance.

"O Running Fox! Running Fox!" screamed Spotted Deer.

"Use your knife!" cried Running Fox.

The next instant he was upon the panther. He plunged his flint knife deep behind the shoulder. Then, as the infuriated beast turned upon him, he

drove an arrow into its body. Quenischquney leaped, but crashed to the ground within a bow-length. For some moments he thrashed wildly about in the ferns, coughing and snarling furiously. Then he became still. The lads approached cautiously, and saw him lying quietly upon his side. Running Fox drove another arrow into him, but he failed to move. Then they went up to him, and saw that he was dead.

"Did Quenischquney do much harm to you?" Running Fox asked Spotted Deer. "Come over here and let me look at you."

"No, Quenischquney did not harm me," Spotted Deer replied, bravely. "I felt his claws, but I stuck my knife into his throat, and he could not bite me. Yes, I am bloody, but most of it came from Quenischquney. It is a good thing you were with me. If I had been alone I might have been killed."

Running Fox saw that Spotted Deer had escaped without serious injury. He had a number of painful gashes on his arms and the upper part of his body, but Running Fox hurried him to the spring and soon stopped the bleeding by soaking

small pieces of sphagnum moss in the cold water and inserting it in the wounds.

"Well, you will have some marks on your body to tell about when we get back to our people," laughed Running Fox.

"I will tell them how you killed Quenischquney," replied Spotted Deer.

As Spotted Deer declared that he felt little pain from his injuries, they returned to the dead panther and cut off the claws. Then they sang medicine-songs, and danced about the body of Quenischquney until well along toward the middle of the night.

"Now we will stop," Running Fox said, finally. "It will soon be light. Come, we will go back and lie down again."

"Yes, we can sleep easy, fierce Quenischquney will not trouble us now," replied Spotted Deer.

CHAPTER VII

THE MYSTERIOUS CANOE

THE Delawares had not gone far the following day before they came upon an inviting eddy in the river, and as the day was unusually warm they determined to loiter for a swim. The water was cool and refreshing, and they splashed about in great delight. Spotted Deer especially enjoyed it, for the cold water felt very soothing to the burning gashes he had received from the panther. In spite of their frolicking, however, the lads kept a sharp watch for foes. They soon saw the necessity of it, as Running Fox suddenly looked up the river and discovered something which caused them to scramble frantically to the shore.

A bark canoe had suddenly appeared around a bend of the river, and was drifting slowly toward them. The lads watched it with great uneasiness. It appeared to be unoccupied and abandoned. Still the suspicious Delawares feared a trap.

"Perhaps some one is lying down inside of it," suggested Spotted Deer.

"Well, we will soon be able to find out about that," replied Running Fox.

They studied the approaching canoe with great attention, but were unable to tell to what tribe it belonged. Running Fox had been well trained in the art of observing, and his sharp eyes soon told him enough to quiet his fears.

"See, it sits high in the water," he told Spotted Deer. "If any one was inside it would be low down and heavy."

"Yes, that is true," agreed Spotted Deer. "But some one may be swimming on the other side of it."

"No, I do not believe it," said Running Fox. "It does not tremble, and it leaves no trail."

Satisfied, therefore, that the mysterious canoe was deserted, the Delawares wondered how they might gain possession of it without exposing themselves to discovery. They feared that crafty foes might be watching from ambush, and they hesitated to show themselves.

"See, it is moving toward land," Running Fox whispered, excitedly.

A short distance below them a narrow gravelly beach reached far out into the water, and they noticed that the canoe was drifting directly toward it. They watched eagerly until the canoe finally struck upon the projecting point of land. Then, as the canoe swung slowly about with the current, they realized that they must act quickly to secure it.

"I will go out and catch it," said Running Fox.

He skulked through the bushes as cautiously as a fox. When he reached the spot where the canoe had struck he stopped to search the river for foes. Then he saw the canoe swinging stern foremost down the river. He realized that in another moment it would be beyond his reach. Throwing caution to the winds, Running Fox rushed boldly into the water and seized the prize. As he had guessed, it was unoccupied. As he drew it toward him it left a tell-tale mark in the gravel. However, he made no attempt to erase it, for he hoped that any one following on the trail would find it and be deceived. It made it appear that, having

lodged for a time at that spot, the canoe had finally floated free and drifted down the river.

Once in actual possession of the canoe, Running Fox signaled for Spotted Deer to join him. They waded with the prize until they found a safe hiding place, and then they dragged it into the bushes. They had found a long hickory bow and a buckskin quiver filled with arrows in the bottom of the canoe.

"This is very strange," said Running Fox, as he examined the weapons.

The lads saw at once that they were different in pattern from their own, and they had little doubt that they were of Iroquois design. Still they were not sure. They stared at them in amazement. The whole affair was a great mystery. They would have given much to know how far the canoe had come, and how the weapons happened to be in it.

"Whoever left these things in that canoe was very foolish," said Spotted Deer.

"Well, I see that he kept the paddle," replied Running Fox.

"That is true, I did not see that," said Spotted Deer.

At first the Delawares were inclined to keep the weapons, and hide the canoe in the woods until they returned down the river on their way to the Delaware camp. It would have been a splendid trophy, and they dreaded to lose it, but Running Fox finally decided to set it adrift.

"This canoe has floated away, and some one will come down here looking for it," he said. "If they do not find it, they will become suspicious. Perhaps they will look for our trail. We have a long journey to make, and we are in great danger. We will not take any chances. Come, we will keep the weapons, and give up the canoe."

"You are the leader, I will do as you say," Spotted Deer said, resignedly. "But if some one comes after this canoe they will miss the weapons."

"We will fool them about that," laughed Running Fox.

They carried the canoe to the water, and as they set it adrift Running Fox overturned it with his foot. Spotted Deer laughed as he saw the reason for the wily bit of stratagem which would make the owner of the canoe believe that his weapons

were somewhere at the bottom of the river. They watched until the canoe floated slowly from sight around a bend of the shore.

"Now we must hide, and watch to see who comes after it," said Running Fox.

They concealed themselves in the bushes, and began to watch the river. All day they remained there, as alert and patient as a lynx waiting for prey. Nothing escaped them. Their eyes caught every movement, their ears heard every sound.

"I do not believe any one will come," said Spotted Deer, after they had watched a long time in vain.

"We must wait," Running Fox told him.

Then, toward the end of the day, their patience was rewarded. They saw a second canoe coming swiftly down the river. They saw at once that it was similar in pattern to the one that had preceded it. It was guided by two sturdy paddlers, whom the lads recognized even at a distance as Mohawk warriors. It was not the first time that the young Delawares had seen those fierce fighters, for several had been captured and brought to the village by Delaware scouts. Now, however, they looked

upon them with different emotions. The lads felt their hearts pounding wildly against their ribs as the Mohawks approached, but they had concealed themselves with great care and they had little fear of being discovered. At any rate there was no chance to retreat.

"We must keep very quiet," cautioned Running Fox.

The Mohawks kept to the middle of the river, while they watched the shore for signs of the missing canoe. As they passed, the lads studied them closely. The warrior in the stern of the canoe was a powerful middle-aged man of threatening appearance, but his companion looked more youthful and pleasing of countenance. They turned the canoe toward the beach, and the Delawares wondered whether they would discover the mark in the gravel. They were not long left in doubt, for they saw the younger warrior pointing toward the spot, and talking excitedly to his companion. The latter seemed suspicious. It was apparent that he was watching the shore. Then he said something, and they moved slowly toward the beach. They spent some time studying

the mark in the gravel, and the Delawares watched them in painful suspense. They wondered whether the crafty Mohawks would really be deceived by the stratagem of Running Fox. However, they soon saw that it had been successful, for the paddlers pushed out into the current and disappeared down the river.

"We have fooled those warriors," laughed Running Fox.

"I could have sent an arrow into them," said Spotted Deer.

"That would have been very foolish," Running Fox told him. "Perhaps you would not have killed them, and they would have gone back and told their people what had happened. No, we are in a dangerous country, and we must not let them know about us. If they see us it will be hard to get near their camp. The fox does not jump at the bear when he steals to his lodge for meat."

"That is true," agreed Spotted Deer. "Well, I will be very cautious."

"Pretty soon those warriors will come back," said Running Fox. "We must watch sharp."

As the evening shadows were settling upon the

forest the Mohawks returned with the missing canoe. They passed close to the shore, and the Delawares had a splendid view of them. They saw that the faces of the canoemen were streaked with black.

"Those warriors are painted for war," said Running Fox, after the paddlers had passed from hearing.

"Yes, I saw the black marks across their faces," replied Spotted Deer. "Who are they going to fight?"

"I do not know," Running Fox declared, uneasily. "We must find out. Perhaps they are getting ready to fight our people. We will follow them."

They waited until they felt sure that the Mohawks were a safe distance ahead of them, and then they left their hiding place, and followed cautiously up the river. They soon came in sight of the canoes, and trailed them until darkness finally blotted them from sight. Then the Delawares were puzzled. They had expected the Mohawks to stop at the end of the day. The fact that they still continued their journey made the lads be-

lieve that they were either in a great hurry, or else were making toward some familiar camp-site near at hand. The latter possibility induced the Delawares to follow on the trail. They hurried along within sound of the water, straining their eyes to catch the warning flicker of a camp-fire. However, as the night wore on, and they failed to get any trace of the mysterious canoemen, the Delawares began to realize that they were exhausting themselves in vain.

"It is foolish to keep going," declared Running Fox. "Perhaps those warriors will not stop before it gets light. Perhaps they will stop, but if they do not make a fire we cannot find them. They are painted for war. Warriors on the war-trail do not make fires. If we try to go ahead, we may pass them. That would make things bad for us. I believe the best thing to do is to stop until it gets light."

"Yes, I believe it will be the best thing to do," agreed Spotted Deer.

They turned from the river, and reconnoitered carefully through the grim black wilderness in search of a safe stopping place for the night. They

finally found suitable shelter in a thick stand of pines on the summit of a rocky knoll directly above the river.

"This is a good place," said Running Fox. "When it gets light we will be able to see a long ways along the water. Perhaps we will find the Mohawks."

They determined to keep a sharp watch until daylight, for they feared that their foes might be nearer than they supposed. It was agreed that one should remain on guard while the other slept. Spotted Deer said that he would take the first watch. He had not been long on guard when he heard the weird serenade of Gokhos, the owl. Acting upon the impulse of the moment he placed his hands to his mouth, and gave a perfect imitation of the call. Running Fox sprang up at the sound.

"What was that?" he inquired, anxiously.

"I am talking with Gokhos," laughed Spotted Deer.

"You are very foolish," said Running Fox, as his eyes flashed angrily. "Warriors do not cry out like children when there are enemies about to hear. Perhaps what you heard was a signal. I

have heard my father tell how the Mohawks use the voice of Gokhos to call one another. You have done a bad thing.''

Spotted Deer accepted the rebuke in silence. He suddenly realized the peril of his act. It filled him with shame. He could offer no excuse.

''Running Fox, I see that I have done a very foolish thing,'' he said. ''I did not think about it. Now I see that it may get us into trouble. I feel very bad.''

''We will not talk any more about it,'' said Running Fox.

They listened anxiously, and in a few moments they heard the call of Gokhos again echoing through the forest. It seemed to come from farther up the river. The notes sounded perfectly natural, but Running Fox was suspicious.

''I believe it is Gokhos,'' said Spotted Deer.

''Perhaps,'' replied Running Fox.

A short time afterward the cry was repeated nearer at hand, and Running Fox looked at Spotted Deer and smiled.

''Perhaps Gokhos is coming to talk with you,''

he said. "I believe it will be better to move away."

As they retreated cautiously into the night, the weird, mocking cry again came to them through the darkness. Running Fox strained his ears to find a flaw in it, but it sounded genuine. Still he was distrustful.

"Well, perhaps it is only Gokhos," he told Spotted Deer. "I do not hear anything wrong with it, but I do not feel right about it. We have seen the Mohawks. They were painted for war. We are in their country. We must not be too bold."

As he finished speaking they were surprised to hear Gokhos calling from somewhere down the river. For a moment it allayed their suspicions, for they realized that only Gokhos himself could have moved so rapidly. Then they heard the other cry farther to the northward, and their fears were strengthened.

"Now I believe it is the Mohawks calling one another," declared Running Fox. "We will stay here, and watch until it gets light."

CHAPTER VIII

A NARROW ESCAPE

AT daylight the lads continued along the ridge upon which they had spent the night, until they found a spot which offered them a long, unobstructed view of the river. Then they settled themselves to watch for their foes. The mysterious owl calls on the previous night had convinced them that some of the Mohawks were still down the river, and they hoped before long to see them. They waited patiently until half of the day had passed, but no one appeared.

"Perhaps they are moving through the woods on foot," suggested Spotted Deer.

"Perhaps," replied Running Fox. "We have watched a long time, but we have not seen any one. I believe the Mohawks have passed some other way. Come, we will go ahead."

They advanced through the forest with great caution, for they knew that they might come face to face with their foes at any moment. Watchful,

and alert to their peril, therefore, the lads took every precaution. Nothing escaped their notice. They stopped suspiciously each time the wind stirred the leaves; they strained their ears to catch a warning in the most familiar sound. The fact that the Mohawk canoemen were painted for war suggested the possibility of a large war-party somewhere near at hand. The Delawares knew that under those circumstances many sharp-eyed scouts were roaming through the woods on all sides of them.

Toward the end of the day the lads heard a wild turkey calling. It seemed to be somewhere on a ridge to the eastward, and they stopped to listen. It was a common sound in the woods about the Delaware camp, and under other circumstances they would have given little attention to it. However, with the owl calls fresh in their minds, the Delawares immediately became suspicious. Running Fox placed his finger across his lips, and looked warningly at Spotted Deer.

"I will keep as still as Achpoques, the wood mouse," laughed Spotted Deer, as he recalled his blunder with the owl calls.

They listened some time before the call was repeated, and then they were unable to discover anything suspicious about it. Nevertheless they determined to wait until they heard it again. The next time, however, Running Fox thought he detected an unfamiliar note. He had hunted wild turkeys since he was old enough to pull a bowstring, and he was an expert at imitating their call.

"I do not like that," he told Spotted Deer. "No, I do not believe it is Gulukochsun."

"Well, we will listen again," said Spotted Deer. "I did not hear anything wrong about it."

However, as the familiar gobble again rolled through the woods Running Fox was compelled to acknowledge that he found it entirely natural. Still he was not satisfied.

"This is not the time when Gulukochsun sounds his war-cry," he declared, suspiciously.

"I have been thinking about that," replied Spotted Deer.

Then as they continued to listen they heard an answer. It sounded as if it came from the opposite side of the river. The lads looked at each

other and nodded significantly. When they heard the call a second time they detected several strange notes that proclaimed it false. They felt certain that it came from a human throat.

"Perhaps some hunter is trying to draw Gulukochsun over there," suggested Spotted Deer.

"No, I do not believe it," said Running Fox. "A hunter would come over here to find Gulukochsun."

"Yes, that is true," agreed Spotted Deer.

The counterfeit call was soon answered, and then the gobbling ceased. The lads were filled with suspicion. They began to mistrust that both calls were false. They believed that Iroquois scouts were again exchanging signals.

"Perhaps these are the same people who talked with the words of Gokhos," said Spotted Deer.

"Yes, that may be true," replied Running Fox. "Well, I believe they are going to meet down there at the water. We will steal down there and have a look at them."

"That will be a dangerous thing to do," said Spotted Deer.

"Yes, we must be very careful," Running Fox told him.

Then they began a daring advance toward the river. They believed that the scout whom they had heard first was still somewhere behind them, and they hoped to reach the river ahead of him. They moved swiftly, therefore, watching and listening for the first warning of danger. When they finally got within easy bow-shot of the water they concealed themselves in a dense thicket of willows. Then they watched anxiously for their enemies to appear. It was not long before they again heard the turkey call on the other side of the river. A few moments after it had ceased, an answering gobble sounded from the woods directly back of them. It was so perfect that if they had heard it under any other circumstances they would have been entirely deceived.

"Now watch sharp," cautioned Running Fox.

At that instant they saw a solitary warrior moving swiftly along in the shadow of the trees on the opposite shore. In a few moments he dragged a canoe from the bushes, and paddled rapidly across the river. He had barely landed before an-

other warrior passed noiselessly within several bow-lengths of the concealed Delawares, and joined him at the edge of the water.

"They are Mohawks," whispered Running Fox.

Spotted Deer was about to reply when one of the warriors suddenly turned and looked directly toward their hiding place. The lads felt quite sure that they had been discovered, and their hearts bounded wildly at the thought. Still it seemed impossible for the low whisper from Running Fox to have reached the figures at the edge of the water. However, after a moment or so the warrior had again turned to his companion, and the lads breathed easier. Then they heard a bird stirring about noisily in the undergrowth, and they understood why the warrior had looked toward their hiding place. They instantly realized the danger that threatened them, for both warriors were now looking intently toward the willows. The Delawares feared that in another moment their suspicious foes might decide to investigate the sound. Discovery seemed near at hand. They realized that they must do something to quiet the fears of their enemies. There was not a moment

to spare. The lads looked anxiously into each other's eyes. Then the bird resumed its noisy search for food. One of the warriors prepared to send an arrow into the willows. At that moment Running Fox discovered the bird scratching among the leaves. The bird saw him at almost the same instant, and as he moved cautiously it sounded an alarm and flew above the bushes. The Mohawk laughed and lowered his bow. The danger had passed.

Spotted Deer started to say something, but Running Fox placed his finger across his lips and warned him to be still. Their narrow escape had made him doubly cautious, and he feared that the lightest whisper might reach the sensitive ears of those alert scouts. They were conversing earnestly, and although they talked in guarded tones the lads distinctly heard the low unintelligible hum of their voices. They listened eagerly for they would have given much to know what was being said. However, the Mohawks were talking too cautiously to give them a clue. Besides, the Delawares doubted that they would have understood the Iroquois dialect even if they had heard it.

Once the warrior who had crossed the river swept his arm toward the west, and the lads believed that he was describing something of importance which he had discovered in that direction. The Delawares studied the two men closely. They saw at once that they were not the warriors whom they had seen the previous day. These Mohawks were both great stalwart men in the prime of life. Their faces, too, were painted black in token of war. It was evident that they were scouts searching the forest for signs of their foes. In a few moments they entered the canoe, and poled it rapidly up the river.

"Come, we must follow them," declared Running Fox. "I believe the Mohawks are gathering a great war-party. We must find out where they are."

Once the canoemen had disappeared around a long wooded arm of the shore, the Delawares left the willows, and hurried through the woods in pursuit of them. They kept a safe distance from the water for they feared that the crafty Mohawks might suddenly return on their trail to make sure that no one was following them. The

lads had a vague idea that they were nearing the headwaters of the river, and they began to look for several prominent landmarks which had been described to them. Toward evening they saw the first of them, a great granite-topped mountain on the opposite side of the river. They had often heard it mentioned by the Delaware scouts, and they realized that they were close to the great Mohawk trail, which began at the headwaters of the river and extended many leagues into the north. They also knew that the Shawnees entered that region from the westward, and their trails, too, were to be found somewhere in the vast forest beyond the river. The young Delawares realized, therefore, that each stride was taking them into more perilous ground, and they advanced with great care.

As the long evening shadows finally began to reach out over the water, the Delawares feared that their foes were again about to escape under cover of the darkness. The possibility made them more daring, and they hurried along closer to the river. They had not gone far, however, when they discovered the Mohawks moving slowly

along near the shore. Just before dark they landed, and dragged the canoe into the shadows.

"I believe they will stay at that place until it gets light," said Running Fox.

"We will watch for their fire," said Spotted Deer.

"They will not light a fire," declared Running Fox. "Now I will tell you what to do. It would be foolish to go any nearer to them before it gets light. We will stay where we are. When the light comes I will tell you something else."

"Well, you are the leader," replied Spotted Deer. "I will listen to your words."

When it grew dark they crawled beneath the drooping branches of a large spruce. Then as the night wore on, and they heard nothing from their foes, they stole silently to the river. All was black, and still, and mysterious, and they were glad to return to their hiding place beneath the spruce.

As the first gray hint of dawn appeared in the east Running Fox awakened Spotted Deer, and led the way to the river. They waded carefully into the water and swam to the opposite shore.

Then they stole silently through the woods until they were opposite their enemies. Dropping to their hands and knees, they crawled into the fringe of bushes that lined the water. Then, as the light strengthened, and they peered eagerly between the branches, they saw three overturned canoes dimly outlined in the shadows on the other side of the river.

"That is strange," whispered Spotted Deer.

"The Mohawks have found one another," said Running Fox.

A short time afterward they saw a lone figure at the edge of the forest. They felt certain it was one of the Mohawk scouts. He stood in the shadows watching the river. Then he hastened across the narrow beach, and dropped at the edge of the water to drink. As he rose he looked across the river, and the lads thought they recognized him.

"He is one of the warriors who found the canoe," said Spotted Deer.

"Yes, now I see what has happened," replied Running Fox. "When we heard the calls of Gokhos, then that warrior and his friend were talking with the warriors we followed here. Now they are

all together. Pretty soon they will meet the war-party."

The Mohawk had already returned to the woods, and the lads watched anxiously. Then they saw four figures gather about the canoes. They had little difficulty in identifying them as the four scouts whom they had seen previously. The Delawares were somewhat puzzled, however, when the Mohawks carried two canoes to the water, and left the third lying at the edge of the woods. Then three of the warriors entered the two canoes and paddled up the river. The fourth Mohawk, whom the lads recognized as the younger of the two who had searched for the canoe, remained behind. He stood some moments looking after his companions, and when they passed from sight he turned up the beach and disappeared into the forest.

"I believe the Mohawks have found some signs of the Shawnees," declared Running Fox. "They have left that warrior to watch. It is bad. Now we cannot follow them. We must wait and see what he is going to do."

"Perhaps he will wait there until the war-party appears," said Spotted Deer.

The possibility disturbed them, for they knew in that event they would be in a serious predicament. It was a long time before their suspense was ended. Then the Mohawk carried his canoe to the water, and disappeared down the river. The Delawares had not expected that maneuver, and they were unable to guess a reason for it.

"Perhaps the Mohawks have found the Shawnees, and that warrior has gone to watch them," suggested Spotted Deer.

"Perhaps," replied Running Fox. "I do not like it. Perhaps there are more Mohawks behind us. Yes, the war-party may be moving the other way."

The thought alarmed them. As soon as the solitary warrior had passed from sight, therefore, the Delawares hurried up the river on the trail of his companions. When half of the day had passed they reached the headwaters of the river. They had failed to overtake the Mohawks, and they were somewhat at a loss to know just what to do.

"It is bad," declared Running Fox. "We have come to a dangerous place. We have lost sight

of the Mohawks. We must be very careful until we find their trail."

"Perhaps they are watching this place," said Spotted Deer.

"Well, we will creep around as softly as Quenischquney, the panther," replied Running Fox.

They scouted cautiously about the headwaters of the river until they found a narrow trail leading toward the north. When they stooped and examined it they found evidence which convinced them that some one had passed over it that very day. They had little doubt that it was the three Mohawks whom they had followed up the river.

"Perhaps this is the trail that leads to the great Mohawk camp," said Spotted Deer.

"No, my father told me different," declared Running Fox. "This trail leads to a big lake. Beyond that there are no trails. It will be hard to find the Mohawk camp."

They were moving carefully along the trail when they were halted by the sound of voices directly ahead of them. It was evident that the speakers were almost upon them, and the startled lads darted into the bushes and dropped to the ground.

In a few moments they saw two of the Mohawk canoemen returning along the trail. They were walking slowly and looking intently at the ground. It looked as if they had dropped something, and had come back to find it. The Delawares were on the verge of panic, for they believed that the sharp-eyed scouts would be almost sure to discover their trail. However, when the Mohawks passed by within bow-length of them the lads took hope. When they had gone from hearing, Running Fox sprang to his feet and called upon Spotted Deer to follow him.

"Come, we must fool those warriors, and get a good start," he said.

They ran directly along the trail, being careful to leave plenty of tracks. They had not gone far, however, before they heard the shrill cry of Nianque, the lynx, ringing through the woods behind them.

"That is a danger signal," Running Fox declared, excitedly. "Those warriors have found our trail. Now we must run far back into the woods and hide."

They turned from the trail, and sped through

the forest like frightened deer. Then the lynx cry again sounded from the trail, and in a few moments they heard it answered from the north. They knew that the warriors who had discovered their trail had warned their comrade, and they believed that they would soon be pursued.

CHAPTER IX

FORCED INTO HIDING

THE Delawares had not gone far when they heard sounds which convinced them that the Mohawks were already searching for them. The thought spurred them to greater efforts, and they scrambled frantically to the top of a low hardwood ridge to reconnoiter. They saw what appeared to be a large spruce swamp directly ahead of them, and they determined to make it their hiding place.

"If we reach that place it will be hard for the Mohawks to find us," said Running Fox.

As they started down the ridge, however, the piercing Mohawk war-cry rang in their ears, and an arrow hummed angrily between them. Spotted Deer instantly turned to fight, but Running Fox seized his arm and dragged him forward.

"Run! If we stop we may be surrounded!" cried Running Fox.

They tore through the undergrowth at top speed

and another arrow flew harmlessly above their heads. As they ran Running Fox continued to shout, "Saganaga! Saganaga!" It was the name by which the Delawares were known to the Iroquois, and Spotted Deer could not guess his reason for proclaiming his identity. They heard the Mohawk yelling savagely somewhere behind them, and they knew that he was leading his comrades to the trail.

"Let us wait, and kill that warrior," proposed Spotted Deer.

"Yes, yes, as soon as we get to the swamp," replied Running Fox.

However, as they neared the swamp they heard other cries still farther behind them, and they realized that more Mohawks had joined the chase. Then the cries and signals suddenly ceased, and the Delawares knew that their foes were hurrying along in silence in the hope of surprising them. The lads dared not slacken their pace, and when they finally reached the border of the swamp they were almost exhausted. Then they turned at bay, and waited in ambush to kill the Mohawk who had attacked them on the summit of the ridge.

"How did that warrior come up with us so fast?" inquired Spotted Deer.

"Well, I believe that warrior was there all the time," declared Running Fox. "Perhaps he was traveling along that ridge when he heard the danger cry of his people. Then he stopped to listen. Pretty soon he heard us coming through there. Then he tried to kill us. I do not believe he knows who we are."

"Then why did you keep calling out 'Saganaga'?" demanded Spotted Deer. "Now he will know that we are Delawares."

"No, he will not know it," laughed Running Fox. "I called out that way to fool him. He will take us for Shawnees. Yes, he will say, 'Hi, the frightened Shawanos took me for a Saganaga. Yes, he will tell his people about it. They will take us for the boastful Shawnees."

"Running Fox, you are very sharp," said Spotted Deer. "Now I see that you have done a good thing. But we must kill that warrior who found us on the ridge. Yes, he will lead his people to this place, and perhaps they will find us."

"Well, I would like to kill him, but I do not be-

lieve he will rush ahead alone," replied Running Fox. "Perhaps he was with a war-party. I believe the best thing we can do will be to go into this big swamp and hide."

They watched and listened a few moments longer, and then they retreated into the dreary depths of the swamp. Two-thirds of the day had passed, and they believed that it would be impossible for the Mohawks to find them before it grew dark. Then they hoped to steal away under cover of the night. However, the Mohawks seemed determined to transform the swamp into a trap, for instead of following the fugitives they scattered and surrounded their hiding place. At nightfall the Delawares heard them signaling on all sides of them, and their hearts filled with gloom. Running Fox began to fear that he had blundered.

"Spotted Deer, I believe we have done a foolish thing," he said, bitterly. "Yes, I believe we should have kept out of this place."

"The Mohawks cannot find us here," Spotted Deer declared, confidently.

"Well, I am not sure about it," replied Running Fox. "But it will be hard to get away."

It was too late for regrets, however, and the Delawares determined to make the best of their predicament. When it grew dark, therefore, they began a cautious advance toward the edge of the swamp. They moved through the darkness as silently as phantoms. They had gone a considerable distance when Running Fox suddenly stopped and whispered a warning to Spotted Deer, who was following a bow-length behind him.

"Listen, something is coming," cautioned Running Fox.

"Where is it?" inquired Spotted Deer.

"Sh," breathed Running Fox.

Then, as they hastily prepared their arrows and stood there endeavoring to identify the sound, they heard stealthy footfalls somewhere ahead of them. They had little doubt that it was one of their foes. They wondered if it was the warrior who had surprised them on the ridge. A moment later a pair of great glassy eyes glowed in the darkness, and then they heard a frightened snort. The next instant a deer crashed off toward the border of the swamp.

"It was only Achtu," said Spotted Deer.

"It is bad," declared Running Fox. "If the Mohawks are watching they will hear Achtu. Then they will say, 'Something has frightened that deer. Perhaps it was the people we are looking for.' Yes, they will know where we are. We must turn and go a different way."

"Yes, I believe it would be a good thing to do," agreed Spotted Deer.

The lads immediately changed their course, and planned to leave the swamp farther to the west. They were moving cautiously in that direction when they heard the call of Gokhos, the owl. They felt quite sure it was a signal. In a few moments it was answered by the husky barking of Woakus, the fox. Both calls seemed to come from somewhere in the swamp, and the Delawares feared that the Mohawks had sent scouts to explore their hiding place.

"The scouts have come to find us," said Running Fox. "We will fool them."

They were almost at the border of the swamp when they were turned back by voices directly ahead of them. Then, as they retreated into the night, they again heard the short, quick yapping

of Woakus, the fox. This time it seemed to be almost within bow-shot, and the lads realized their peril. They stopped and waited for the Mohawk scout to pass them. In a few moments they heard him. Then he seemed to stop, and the Delawares wondered if he had discovered them. Long, anxious moments passed while they stood there, with arrows ready, peering expectantly into the night. At last, however, they heard their foe moving toward the edge of the swamp, and they knew that for the moment at least they were safe.

"We must go back to the place we came from," whispered Running Fox. "The Mohawks are all around us. We cannot get away."

"We will hide until they go away," said Spotted Deer.

They began a slow, cautious retreat toward the middle of the swamp. They were stopped many times by mysterious sounds which often seemed within bow-length of them, but each time the danger passed, and they finally gained the depths of the swamp in safety. Then they concealed themselves in the dense top of a fallen hemlock, and determined to stay there until daylight.

"Now we must find a better place," said Running Fox, as the soft gray light of dawn penetrated their hiding place. "Pretty soon the Mohawks will come here to look for us. Then we must hide as close as Wisawanik, the squirrel."

"This is a good place," replied Spotted Deer. "If we keep still it will be hard to see us in here."

"No, I do not like this place," declared Running Fox. "The Mohawks will be sure to look into this tree-top. We must hide where they will not expect to find us."

"Where shall we go?" asked Spotted Deer.

"Come, I will find a place," Running Fox assured him.

Running Fox led the way to a great black spruce with low sweeping branches. Then, as he began to climb, he asked Spotted Deer to remain upon the ground. When Running Fox finally settled himself well up toward the top of the tree, he called down to Spotted Deer and asked if he could see him.

"No, I do not see anything of you," replied Spotted Deer, after he had walked carefully about the tree.

"That is good," said Running Fox. "Now you must climb up here."

As Spotted Deer began to climb they heard the first Mohawk signal. It sounded a short distance south of them. In a few moments they heard other signals from the east, the west and the north.

"The Mohawks have made a circle," said Running Fox. "Pretty soon they will draw together. Well, I do not believe they will find anything in their trap."

"No, Wisawanik has told us how to hide, and we will fool them," laughed Spotted Deer.

It was a long time before the lads heard anything further from their foes. Then a flock of crows made a great commotion a short distance to the right of them, and the Delawares believed that the noisy birds had discovered one of the Mohawk scouts. They took delight in picturing the rage of the helpless Mohawk as he heard the crows proclaiming his advance to all within hearing distance of them.

"Ahas is warning us," whispered Running Fox. "We must watch sharp."

"Ahas is a good friend," replied Spotted Deer.

When they had watched a long time without seeing any one they decided that either Ahas had fooled them, or else the Mohawk had turned in some other direction. Then the noise began again, and this time the crows were much nearer. Peering carefully through the branches, the Delawares saw them circling about above the tree-tops. As they watched them, and realized that the Mohawk scout might move directly toward their hiding place, the lads suddenly understood their peril.

"I do not like that," Running Fox said, uneasily. "If Ahas flies this way it will be bad. Yes, he will see us, and make a great noise. Then the Mohawks will know where to find us."

"That is true," agreed Spotted Deer.

They watched the crows with great anxiety. The birds were flying about in short circles, and making a great racket. Then some of the crows swung off, and flew directly toward the stand of spruces in which the Delawares had taken refuge.

"Now we will see what is going to happen," said Spotted Deer.

"Keep very still," cautioned Running Fox.

As the crows approached their hiding place the

Delawares huddled close to the trunk of the tree, and sat as motionless as statues. The crows passed so near that the lads distinctly heard the sound of their wings. They escaped discovery, however, and the thought gave them confidence.

"See, those other birds are going away," Spotted Deer whispered, excitedly, a few moments afterward.

The crows had suddenly ceased their noise, and were flying off toward the opposite end of the swamp. The Delawares watched them with thankful hearts. They believed that Getanittowit had suddenly chased them away. However, the lads knew that the danger was far from over, for at that moment they heard a signal within bow-shot of their tree. A few moments afterward they heard an answer. Then they heard twigs snapping, and they looked at each other in alarm.

"The Mohawks are here," whispered Running Fox.

They looked carefully down between the branches and saw a Mohawk warrior emerge from the shadows. He stopped within bow-length of the spruce, and the lads breathed fast with excitement.

Then they heard him speak, and they saw that another Mohawk had joined him. The newcomer had approached so quietly that they had failed to hear him, and they realized how easily one of those soft-footed scouts might steal upon them under cover of the night. The two Mohawks exchanged a few words, and then they moved cautiously toward the top of the fallen hemlock. The lads trembled as they realized what would have happened if they had remained in that hiding place. The Mohawks stooped and looked carefully into the dense tangle of branches, and then they seated themselves upon the prostrate trunk. It was not long, however, before another signal sounded close at hand, and one of the warriors raised his hands to his mouth and imitated the gobble of the wild turkey. It brought an immediate response, and soon afterward a third warrior appeared. It looked as if the Mohawks had selected that very spot for a meeting place, and the alarmed Delawares feared the result. They knew that at any moment one of the keen-eyed scouts might decide to look into the tree-tops, and the possibility kept them in painful suspense. Signals were con-

stantly being exchanged between the scouts who had met, and those who were still searching the swamp, and the crafty Delawares were careful to memorize the calls. When the signaling finally ceased the lads counted ten Mohawks sitting in council near the base of the spruce. They were stern, fierce looking men, and the Delawares could easily guess what their fate would be if they fell into their hands.

Finally, after what seemed an eternity to the anxious lads in the tree-top, the Mohawks rose and prepared to leave. However, at the very moment when the Delawares were rejoicing in their good fortune, one of the scouts turned and looked toward the big spruce. The lads believed that in some mysterious way he had suddenly learned their whereabouts. Their hearts almost stopped beating at the thought. The Mohawk was still looking up at the tree, and saying something to one of his companions. That warrior, too, seemed to have discovered something of interest in the top of the spruce. The Delawares were almost afraid to breathe. They knew that the slightest move would betray them. Then as the moments passed, and

the Mohawks showed no intention of attacking them, they began to hope that they had not been seen. Still the two Mohawks continued to talk, and watch the tree. The other scouts had already passed from sight.

"Come, these warriors are alone, let us kill them before they tell their friends about us," whispered Spotted Deer.

"No, we must wait until we are sure they have found us," cautioned Running Fox.

A moment afterward they saw the wisdom of his advice, for the two Mohawks turned and disappeared after their comrades. The Delawares looked after them in wide-eyed astonishment. They could scarcely believe that they had gone.

"See, the robe Wisawanik gave us hides us from our enemies," said Running Fox. "Yes, Ahas flew over us, and could not find us. Then the boastful Mohawks looked into this tree, and could not see us."

"Perhaps the Mohawks have gone to tell their friends about us," suggested Spotted Deer. "Perhaps they will come back."

"No, they would not leave us here to get away,"

replied Running Fox. "I believe that warrior was looking at this great tree. Yes, I believe he was telling his friend something about it. Perhaps something happened to him at this place. I do not believe he saw us."

However, the lads watched anxiously for some time after the Mohawks had disappeared. More than once they thought they heard them returning, but as the time passed and they failed to appear the Delawares began to hope that they had actually left the swamp. They had little doubt that other Mohawks were stationed along the boundaries of the swamp, and they believed it would be folly to attempt to leave their hiding place before their foes had abandoned the search. They felt quite certain that the Mohawks would loiter along the edge of the swamp through the night, hoping that the fugitives would attempt to escape under cover of darkness. Therefore, the wily Delawares determined to remain in the swamp until the following day.

"It is the best thing to do," declared Running Fox. "If the Mohawks do not hear anything of us when it grows dark, then I believe they will

give up the hunt. Yes, I believe they will go away before the next sun appears."

"You are a good leader," Spotted Dear declared, loyally. "You have fooled the Mohawks. Now I believe we will get out of here."

CHAPTER X

SPOTTED DEER DISAPPEARS

THE night passed without alarm, and at daylight the Delawares began to listen for signals. As the time passed, and they neither saw nor heard anything of the Mohawks, they believed that they had finally abandoned the pursuit.

"It is good," declared Spotted Deer. "Now we will hurry away from here."

"No, we must wait a little longer," Running Fox warned him. "I believe the Mohawks have gone away, but we must be sure. Perhaps they are keeping quiet to fool us. Yes, they may be waiting along the edge of the swamp."

"Well, we will stay here," agreed Spotted Deer.

They waited until the day was half gone, and then, having heard nothing to rouse their suspicions, they again moved cautiously toward the border of the swamp. As they neared it, they stopped

and spent a long time listening and watching. The way seemed clear, however, and they determined to risk all on the chance. A few moments afterward they crossed the boundary of the swamp, and disappeared into the forest.

"Now we are safe," laughed Spotted Deer.

"Well, we got out of that trap, but there is still great danger," Running Fox warned him. "This country is filled with our enemies. We must keep watching."

Running Fox turned toward the west, as he believed that the Mohawks were somewhere to the eastward. Besides, if his enemies should discover his trail he hoped to mislead them into believing that he and Spotted Deer were Shawnees, for he knew that those people lived in the great wilderness to the westward. The Delawares continued to travel until long after darkness had fallen, and finally stopped in a dense forest of pines. They were greatly elated over their successful escape, but they were somewhat worried by the thought that the Mohawks might have learned their identity.

"If they know who we are, it will be hard to get near their camp," said Spotted Deer.

"Yes, that is true," replied Running Fox. "But I do not believe they know who we are. I believe they took us for Shawnee scouts."

The next day the Delawares turned toward the north. They had been told that the Mohawk village was somewhere within a day's journey of a large woodland lake, and they climbed to all the high places to look for it. Their efforts were in vain, however, for the vast wilderness continued unbroken as far as they could see. The following day, therefore, Running Fox proposed that they should separate, and explore the country in different directions.

"Yes, I believe it is the best thing to do," said Spotted Deer.

It was agreed that Spotted Deer should reconnoiter from a range of mountains farther to the westward, while Running Fox continued northward along the ridge of hills which they had followed from the headwaters of the river. They planned to meet at the end of the second day at

the base of a large pine-clad mountain about a day's journey toward the north.

"Well, we are going away from each other," said Running Fox. "We will be in great danger. We must not let the Mohawks catch us."

"We will watch out," said Spotted Deer.

They agreed that if either of them failed to appear at the meeting place at the appointed time the other was to wait there a full day longer. Then if his comrade failed to appear he was to go in search of him. The thought depressed them. They realized fully the peril of venturing alone through the stronghold of their foes, but they saw no other way of learning the location of the Mohawk camp. As Running Fox had said, it seemed to be the only thing to do, and they determined to make the best of it. Therefore, they parted without further ceremony, and hurried away on their mission.

Early the second day, as Running Fox reconnoitered from the summit of a high mountain, he discovered what appeared to be a large body of water several days' journey farther toward the north. He watched it a long time, and finally

decided that it must be the lake of which he had heard. Then he examined the sky for a trace of smoke from the hidden Mohawk camp. Several times he thought he had found it, but each time it turned out to be clouds, and he finally decided that it would be useless to waste more time looking for it. Well pleased with his discovery, he hastened down the mountain and set out to meet Spotted Deer.

As Running Fox drew near the meeting place he stopped to reconnoiter. Then, after he had circled carefully through the woods to make sure that no enemies were lurking in the vicinity, he continued toward the spot where he and Spotted Deer had planned to meet. Daylight had faded into dusk, and night was near at hand. They had agreed to meet before dark, and Running Fox felt quite sure that Spotted Deer was already at the meeting place. To make sure he whistled the plaintive notes of the white-throated sparrow. It was one of the signals which they had agreed upon, and Running Fox listened anxiously for the answer. When he had repeated the song many times without getting a reply he began to worry. Then

he told himself that perhaps Spotted Deer was somewhere out of range of the signal. To make sure of reaching him, he imitated the shrill quavering cry of Quenischquney, the panther. It echoed through the woods with startling force, and Running Fox knew that if Spotted Deer were anywhere near he would be sure to hear it. Still it brought no response, and Running Fox was perplexed. Twice more he sent the startling shriek ringing through the wilderness, and each time he feared that sharp Mohawk ears might hear it, and detect the counterfeit. Still he saw no other way of learning whether Spotted Deer was in the vicinity. However, as time passed and he heard nothing from his friend he became alarmed. He wondered what had detained Spotted Deer. The question suggested many alarming possibilities, and Running Fox tried to drive them from his thoughts. He told himself that Spotted Deer would appear before the night passed, and soon after it grew dark he began to signal with the call of the little red owl. He called many times, but no response came out of the darkness. Then, when half of the night had passed, Running Fox

began to lose hope. He feared that Spotted Deer had been killed or captured by the Mohawks, and the thought drove him to despair. His first impulse was to rush recklessly away in search of Spotted Deer. Then he suddenly remembered that he had agreed to wait a full day at the meeting place.

Running Fox spent the following day in an agony of suspense. He neither saw or heard anything of Spotted Deer, and by the time night came the miserable lad had worried himself into a frenzy of despair. He had little doubt that Spotted Deer had fallen a victim to the Mohawks, and he began to blame himself for having sent him upon the expedition. Then his heart filled with anger, and he determined to search the wilderness until he had learned the fate of his friend. If Spotted Deer was a prisoner he vowed to rescue him, and if he had been killed he promised to avenge his death. Then, sleep being out of the question, Running Fox spent the night singing his medicine-songs and praying to Getanittowit for the safety of Spotted Deer.

Day had barely dawned when Running Fox

started away in search of his friend. He turned toward the west, and traveled at a pace that brought him to the rugged range of mountains which Spotted Deer had set out to explore, by midday. He climbed to the top of the ridge and continued toward the north. As he sped through the forest, the distracted lad kept a constant watch for the trail of Spotted Deer. However, he was unable to find the slightest clue, and at dark he abandoned the search with a heavy heart.

Having failed to discover any evidence of his friend, Running Fox was in doubt as to just what to do. He still hoped that Spotted Deer might be safe, and in that case he believed that he would eventually return to the meeting place. Running Fox realized, therefore, that unless he, too, returned, Spotted Deer might go in search of him. He told himself that in that event they might never find each other. On the other hand if Spotted Deer had been captured each moment was precious, and Running Fox dreaded to think what might happen if he blundered into a wrong decision. At daylight, however, he determined to return to the place where they had agreed to meet.

The day had ended when Running Fox finally arrived at the appointed rendezvous. He approached the spot with high hopes. At each stride he expected to hear the familiar signal from his friend. When he failed to hear it, he stopped and again whistled the notes of the white-throated sparrow. Then he waited, straining his ears for the reply. There was no answer, however, and Running Fox gave way to despair. He needed no further proof. He was sure that Spotted Deer had fallen into the hands of his foes. As he pictured his plight, Running Fox blamed himself for not continuing the search. He feared he had lost the chance of saving Spotted Deer. Running Fox knew only too well the hatred which the Mohawks held for his people, and he felt sure that they would lose little time in taking vengeance upon the unfortunate young captive. The thought drove him to distraction. He determined to return at once to the distant mountain range, and continue the search until he found the Mohawks and learned the fate of his friend. However, his strength was unequal to the task, for two days of forced traveling had completely exhausted him. He realized,

therefore, that it would be folly to attempt to do anything further until he had recovered from his exertions.

Night had already closed down, and the disconsolate young warrior threw himself upon the ground, and moaned out his grief for his friend. At intervals he roused himself, and sat up to listen. More than once he fancied he heard a cautious footfall near at hand, or a faint signal farther away, and his heart bounded wildly. Each time, however, his imagination played him false, and his hope gave way to deeper despair. At other times he imitated the call of the little red owl. It was a favorite signal which he and Spotted Deer had used since their first hunting expedition, and his heart ached as it went unanswered. Then his tortured brain finally sought relief in sleep.

The sun was shining when Running Fox awakened. As he opened his eyes, and sat up, he exclaimed with surprise. Spotted Deer was seated within bow-length of him.

"Yes, I am here," laughed Spotted Deer, as Running Fox continued to stare at him in speechless amazement.

"I cannot believe what I see," stammered Running Fox, as he moved over to Spotted Deer and seized his hand. "Well, now I see that you are not a ghost. How did you get here?"

"I came to this place while it was dark," explained Spotted Deer. "Then I gave the call of the little red owl. I did that many times, but no one answered. Then I moved around looking for you. At last I found you. At first I was frightened, for I thought you were dead. When you did not move I touched you. You did not feel it. Then I shook you. You did not feel that either. Then I got frightened again. Well, I stooped over and listened. I heard your breath. That made me feel good. Then I said, 'I will sit here beside him, and pretty soon he will open his eyes and see me.' Well, you kept on sleeping, and pretty soon I fell asleep. When it grew light I opened my eyes. Then I waited. Now you see me."

Running Fox spent some moments in silent meditation. He was greatly disturbed at what Spotted Deer had told him. He realized that utter exhaustion had placed him at the mercy of any

foe who might have happened along. The thought worried him. He felt ashamed of his weakness.

"Spotted Deer, I see you here alive—it is enough," Running Fox declared, warmly. "I believed that the Mohawks had caught you. Now I see that you have escaped. I am feeling good again. But I must tell you that I am troubled about something else. You say that you came up and took hold of me. That is bad. A good war-leader would not let that happen. I do not know how it happened, but I feel bad about it."

"Running Fox, you must not talk that way," replied Spotted Deer. "Perhaps it will never happen again. You were very tired."

Then Running Fox told of his exhausting search to find him, and Spotted Deer instantly understood the reason for the helpless condition in which he had found him.

"Now I see how it happened," said Spotted Deer. "If you were not very strong you would have been dead. Yes, if you were not a good war-leader you would not have come back here. We will not talk any more about it."

"Well, what did you find?" inquired Running Fox.

"I found a big war-party," declared Spotted Deer.

"Tell about it," Running Fox said, eagerly.

"Well, after I went away from here I went right to those mountains where you tried to find me," said Spotted Deer. "I could not see any water so I kept going ahead. Soon after the second sun I heard some signals. Then I heard some more. That made me very cautious. Well, pretty soon I found an old trail. It turned back this way. Then I hid myself between some rocks, and began to watch. After a long time I heard some one coming. Then two warriors went by very fast. I could not see what they looked like. Well, I kept watching, and pretty soon I heard many voices. Then I saw that those people were not following the trail. They passed behind me. I followed them. When the next sun came I saw that they were moving toward The-Place-Where-The-Cold-Comes-From. Then I climbed a high hill, and saw a big piece of water. It was about two suns' travel ahead of those people. Then I

said, 'Hi, they are Mohawks, and their village is near that water.' Well, I found out what I wished to know. Then I came here."

When Spotted Deer finished speaking Running Fox remained silent. He seemed to be thinking about what Spotted Deer had told him. The latter watched him closely. He wondered if he had displeased him by remaining away so long.

"Well, Running Fox, how do you feel about it?" asked Spotted Deer.

"You say that you have found out what you wished to know," replied Running Fox. "I am not sure about that. I, too, saw that piece of water. I came back to tell about it. I did not see any signs of the Mohawk village. Perhaps it is near some other piece of water. You say that you could not tell who those warriors are. Then how do you know that they are Mohawks? We must not be too sure about that. There is only one way to find out. We must catch up with them. Spotted Deer, I am not saying anything against what you have done. This is our first war-trail. You found those people. It was a good thing to do."

"Running Fox, you have spoken good words," declared Spotted Deer. "Now I see that I did not find out enough about those people. Well, I will do whatever you tell me to do."

"We will go and find them," replied Running Fox.

CHAPTER XI

A SKIRMISH WITH THE SHAWNEES

THE Delawares immediately set out to find the distant lake, and learn the identity of the people whom Spotted Deer had seen. They followed the route which Running Fox had taken several days before, and late the second day they climbed to the top of the high mountain from which he had discovered the lake. They judged that the water was about two days' journey away.

"Does that look like the water you saw?" Running Fox asked Spotted Deer.

"Yes, it is the same," replied Spotted Deer.

Then he turned toward the west, and pointed out the route which the unknown war-party had followed.

"Well, if they did not turn off some other way they must be at the water by now," declared Running Fox. "It would be foolish to try to catch up with them. We must go ahead carefully, and see if we can find their camp."

"Yes, that is how I feel about it," agreed Spotted Deer.

They spent the night on the mountain-top, and at dawn resumed their journey toward the lake. Later in the day, as they were making their way through a dense swamp, they heard a harsh cry over their heads. Looking up they saw a large bald eagle circling slowly above the tree-tops. Running Fox immediately became excited.

"See, there is Woapalanne!" he cried. "That means a fight. Yes, I saw him flying around like that before I had the battle with the bear. Do you hear him calling? Well, that is the war-cry of his people. Spotted Deer, I believe we are going into some kind of danger."

"Well, I do not know about those things, but I believe that what you say is true," said Spotted Deer.

They watched the eagle with gloomy forebodings, and as it chanced to disappear into the north their suspicions were strengthened. Running Fox felt confident that they were about to have an encounter with their foes.

"We must keep together, and watch sharp," he warned Spotted Deer.

At the end of the following day they reached the lake. Having seen nothing of the roving company of warriors that Spotted Deer had encountered, the lads wondered whether they were encamped somewhere along the shore of the lake. They determined to take every precaution, and instead of advancing directly to the lake they stopped on the top of a low ridge some distance back from the water.

"We will wait here until it gets dark," said Running Fox. "Then we will crawl down there, and see if we can find out anything."

The lake was large, and the Delawares had little doubt that it was the body of water for which they had been cautioned to watch. They wondered where the Mohawk camp was located. They believed it was somewhere toward the north. Still they saw no evidence of it. They searched the sky until dark, but were unable to find a trace of smoke. Then, as night finally shut down, they determined to go to the shore of the lake to search for the war-party.

The Delawares stole down through the silent black woods as softly and as cautiously as Woakus, the fox. When they reached the edge of the water they immediately sat down to watch and listen. They had little hope of finding the tell-tale gleam from a camp-fire, for they knew that if the Mohawks were actually on the war-trail they would not dare to expose themselves in that manner, even in the heart of their own stronghold. Therefore, when the lads found nothing to alarm them, they advanced carefully along the shore of the lake. They had gone some distance when they were astonished to see the light of a fire shining out over the water. It was far ahead of them near the other end of the lake, and for some moments the Delawares watched it in silence.

"It must be that those warriors have stopped there," said Spotted Deer.

"It is mysterious," replied Running Fox. "If those people are on the war-trail why do they make a fire?"

The lads were unable to explain it. They had seen the Mohawks painted for war, and under

those circumstances it seemed incredible that they would dare to make a fire. It appeared as if it must have been lighted by some one else. Still, that too seemed beyond belief. The Delawares realized that even a large war-party of enemies would scarcely be so bold in the domains of their foes. Then Spotted Deer suggested that it might be a company of warriors from one of the western villages of the Iroquois.

"Yes, that may be true," agreed Running Fox. "But there is something strange about it."

"What is it?" inquired Spotted Deer.

"Well, these people may be Oneidas or Onondagas," said Running Fox. "Perhaps they have come here to talk with their brothers, the Mohawks. Perhaps they do not know that the Mohawks are on the war-trail. Perhaps they have not seen any enemies on their journey. Well, if this water is near the Mohawk village, why did these people stop here? If they are the same people you saw, then they must have arrived here before the last sun appeared. Why did they wait here? If they had gone on they would be pretty close to the Mohawk camp by now."

"What you say is true," replied Spotted Deer. "But I will tell you how it might be. I do not believe these people are Mohawks. I believe I was wrong about that. I believe that they are Oneidas or Onondagas. Perhaps they are Cayugas or Senecas from far away toward the place Where-The-Sun-Goes-To-Sleep. Well, perhaps they have made a long journey. Perhaps they want to rest. Perhaps the Mohawks do not know they are here. Then they must wait. Yes, they must send scouts to tell the Mohawks that they are coming to see them. Then the Mohawks will get ready a big feast. It is the proper way to do. I believe that is why we have found them here."

"Well, I see that it may be as you say," said Running Fox. "But we will not find out about it by sitting here and talking. We see a fire. Well, we must creep up close, and find out who made it."

"I am ready," declared Spotted Deer.

They rose and began a daring advance along the edge of the lake. They moved with great caution, stopping frequently to listen for a warning of danger. However, the fire was a considerable

distance ahead of them, and they believed that they would be comparatively safe until they got within bow-shot of it. Then they were startled by a loud splash in the river.

"What was that?" Spotted Deer whispered, anxiously.

"Sh," cautioned Running Fox.

They listened many moments but the silence was unbroken.

"Perhaps it was some one paddling a canoe," said Spotted Deer.

"I believe it was a big fish," replied Running Fox. "Perhaps it was Maschilamek, the trout."

Then, as they heard nothing more, they continued toward the fire. They had not gone far before they smelled smoke. They knew that the wind was in their favor. It gave them confidence, for they realized that there was less likelihood of being heard. A short time afterward they saw a small light flash across their path. A moment later it appeared at one side of them. Spotted Deer stopped.

"It is only Sasappis, the fire-fly," whispered Running Fox.

"He is carrying his torch to frighten the witches out of the woods," declared Spotted Deer. "My mother has told me about him. We must be careful not to harm him."

A short distance farther on they were halted by the deep ringing notes of the big horned owl. The call seemed to come from somewhere to the right of them. It was repeated three times in rapid succession, and the Delawares immediately became suspicious. A few moments afterward they heard another owl calling directly behind them. It was so near that they easily detected a number of false notes in it. They knew it was a signal, and their hearts filled with alarm.

"We have run into a trap," Running Fox whispered, savagely. "Come, we must get to the water. It is the only chance."

They were close upon the river, but as they turned to reach it they heard twigs snapping directly ahead of them. Then they realized that they had been surrounded, and that they must fight against heavy odds to save themselves. They saw now that the fire was a clever ruse of their enemies to draw their foes into an ambush. The

lads had little doubt that they were again face to face with the hated Mohawks.

"Stand still!" whispered Running Fox, as they heard some one passing through the bushes at the edge of the river. "It is dark, and they may go by us. Then we must rush into the water, and swim to the other side."

"Let us climb into a tree," proposed Spotted Deer.

"No, that would be foolish," replied Running Fox. "These people have surrounded us. They are close. If we climb into a tree they will know where we have gone. Then they will wait until it gets light, and kill us like Wisawanik, the squirrel."

The next moment a piercing yell rang through the night, and the Delawares heard their foes rushing forward on all sides of them. For an instant they stood there, filled with panic. Then Running Fox recovered his wits, and took command.

"Come, we must fight our way to the water!" he cried.

Fitting arrows to their bows they hurried toward

the river. They had not covered half of the distance, when two stalwart figures rose out of the darkness to oppose them. An arrow sped close to Running Fox, and the next instant his own arrow dropped his enemy to the ground. Turning to call Spotted Deer, he heard him thrashing about in the undergrowth. Rushing to his assistance, Running Fox found him fighting valiantly for his life. Running Fox drove an arrow between the shoulders of his assailant, and as the warrior rolled over the young Delaware stooped and peered eagerly into his face. He felt sure that he was not a Mohawk, but he was unable to identify him. Running Fox noted, however, that the warrior's face was streaked with charcoal, in token of war. Then the lads heard their foes closing in upon them, and they realized that they must be off. As they sped toward the river they heard some one behind them shouting, "Mengwe! Mengwe!" at the top of his voice.

"Now I know who these people are," cried Running Fox. "That person behind us is shouting the Shawnee name for the Mohawks. Yes, this is

a Shawnee war-party. They take us for Mohawks. It is good."

The Delawares reached the edge of the water in safety, and had waded in knee-deep when the first Shawnees appeared on the shore. Then, as an arrow hummed ominously above their heads, the lads plunged forward and swam furiously to escape from bow-shot. They heard the Shawnees rushing into the river in pursuit of them, and as soon as they reached deeper water the Delawares dove from sight. They rose to the surface within several bow-lengths of each other, far out in the river. They listened a moment to make sure that none of their foes were within reach of them, and then they turned and swam toward the opposite shore. They passed through the water as silently as Winingus, the mink, for they knew that sharp-eared foes were listening to catch the faintest sound. They heard a number of signals from the shore they had left, and once they thought they heard voices within bow-shot of them. It drove them to greater efforts, and they raced through the water at top speed. However, as they drew near the shore and found themselves in shal-

low water they moved more cautiously. They believed that, having lost sight of them in the darkness, their crafty foes were listening to hear them leave the water, and they determined to take every precaution against giving a clue.

"We will swim ahead until we are a long ways above this place," proposed Spotted Deer.

"No, that would be a bad thing to do," Running Fox told him. "If the Shawnees reach land they will travel faster than we can move through the water. Perhaps they will send scouts along the edge of the water. Then it would be hard to get into the woods. We will swim ahead a little ways, and then we will walk out."

They swam some distance farther, and then waded ashore. They waited a moment at the edge of the forest to listen for the Shawnees. The fire was still burning brightly on the opposite shore, and the Delawares smiled grimly as they realized how easily they had blundered into the trap that had been set for their enemies, the Mohawks. Then, as they feared that the Shawnee swimmers had reached land and begun to search for them, they turned and sped away into the night.

CHAPTER XII

SMOKE

RUNNING FOX immediately took the lead, and turned toward the north. He believed that the Shawnees would hesitate to follow them far in that direction for fear of being led into an ambush. Besides, it was the only direction in which the Delawares could go without sacrificing their lead. It was not long, however, before they heard signals ringing through the night a short distance behind them.

"The Shawnees are close, we must travel faster," said Running Fox.

Dawn was breaking when they reached the end of the lake. Having heard nothing further from their pursuers they believed that they had turned back. However, the fact that both the Mohawks and the Shawnees were painted for war kept them alert to their danger. They believed that a big battle was impending, and they felt sure that the wilderness was filled with hostile scouts. Shortly

after sunrise, therefore, they stopped to rest, and hold a council-of-war.

"I believe the best thing to do is to keep going ahead until the sun goes down," declared Running Fox. "Then we will climb to a high place, and look for smoke. If we do not see it, then we must circle around. Yes, we must climb to all the high places, and look every way. I do not believe the Mohawk camp is beyond two suns' journey away. Perhaps it is nearer."

"I do not see any other way to do," replied Spotted Deer.

They resumed their way into the north, keeping a sharp watch for their foes, and climbing to the tops of the ridges to search the sky for smoke. At the end of the day, however, they had seen nothing which would give them a clue to the location of the Mohawk camp.

"Perhaps it is not near that water," suggested Spotted Deer. "Perhaps we have gone the wrong way."

"No, I do not believe it," said Running Fox. "I am thinking about something different. The

Mohawks are at war with the Shawnees. Perhaps they are afraid to make fires."

"Then how can we find the camp?" inquired Spotted Deer.

"I believe it will be a hard thing to do," replied Running Fox. "We must ask Getanittowit to help us."

The following day they again decided to separate—Running Fox to make a half circle toward the east, while Spotted Deer made a similar detour toward the west. They agreed to meet at dark at a great spire-shaped rock on the summit of a low hill directly ahead of them.

"No matter what you see, come back when it gets dark," said Running Fox.

"I will do as you tell me," agreed Spotted Deer.

Running Fox made his way toward a ridge of hills less than a half day's journey to the eastward. He had traveled about two-thirds of the distance when he suddenly came upon the remains of a small fire. It had been made between two rocks, and cleverly concealed by a screen of brush. A few embers still glowed from the ashes, and it was evident that whoever had camped there had

only recently departed. Running Fox circled carefully about the spot, trying to learn the identity of the firemaker. He found some tracks leading toward the east. However, he was only able to follow them a short distance, as the country was rough and rocky, and they soon disappeared. Running Fox believed that the crafty scout had purposely left a plain trail for a short distance to baffle his foes. The Delaware felt quite sure that farther on the unknown traveler had turned in another direction.

"I must watch out for that person," Running Fox told himself.

He reached the ridge of hills a short time afterward, and looked anxiously toward the north for evidence of the Mohawk camp. The sky was clear and cloudless, however, and there was no trace of smoke. Running Fox felt troubled. He feared that the unexpected appearance of the Shawnees threatened the success of his expedition. Still he had no thought of turning back. Having made his boast to his father he determined to make it good, or sacrifice his life in the attempt.

The day was well advanced, and Running Fox

had about decided to leave the ridge and return to Spotted Deer, when he suddenly discovered a heavy column of smoke rising above the tree-tops a short distance south of him. It suggested many interesting possibilities, and Running Fox studied it closely. For a long time it puzzled him. He could scarcely believe that it came from the Mohawk camp. In the first place he felt sure that the camp was farther from the lake. Besides, there was but one dense column of smoke, while smoke from a village usually rose in several thin columns, or hovered above the camp in light hazy clouds. Running Fox decided, therefore, that the smoke which he saw must be a signal. The possibility quickened his interest. Then the smoke column began to waver and break. In a few moments he saw it separate into a number of puffs or clouds. They followed one another at short intervals, and Running Fox became convinced that some one was sending a message. He would have given much to have been able to read it. He searched the sky in all directions, hoping to see an answer but none appeared.

"I believe some one is talking to the Mohawk camp," said Running Fox.

The Delaware realized that if his guess was true it was quite probable that the signal would go unanswered. He believed that it would be read by sharp-eyed sentinels who had been stationed on the high places to watch for it, but he felt sure that no tell-tale spiral of smoke would be permitted to betray the location of the village. If an answer were sent, Running Fox believed it would appear somewhere far away from the camp. Still, the mere sight of the signal filled him with hope, for he told himself that the Mohawk village was surely somewhere within sight. He waited until the smoke faded from the sky, and then as he saw nothing to indicate that the signal would be answered he hurried away to meet Spotted Deer.

Darkness had already fallen when Running Fox approached the rock where he was to meet his friend. This time, however, his signal brought an immediate response, for Spotted Deer was waiting for him.

"We have found each other—it is good," said Spotted Deer.

"It is good, my brother," replied Running Fox. "Have you looked around?"

"Yes, I have circled all around this hill; there is no one hiding here," Spotted Deer assured him.

"Then we will sit down and talk," said Running Fox.

Running Fox told what he had seen to the eastward, and Spotted Deer listened with great attention. The smoke particularly impressed him. He agreed with Running Fox that it must have been a signal. However, Spotted Deer was not so sure that it had anything to do with the camp.

"Perhaps that smoke was sent up by the Shawnees," he suggested. "Perhaps a Mohawk scout was talking with the war-party."

"Well, it may turn out that way, but I feel different about it," insisted Running Fox. "Now you must tell me what you found out."

Spotted Deer said that he had gone a considerable distance toward the west without discovering any signs of his foes. Then he had climbed to the top of a mountain to reconnoiter. He had watched a long time when he finally saw what he believed was smoke far away toward the north.

He had strained his eyes to make sure, but it faded from the sky before he could convince himself. Then he had set out to meet Running Fox.

"That is what happened," concluded Spotted Deer.

"Well, we have not done much," Running Fox declared, gloomily. "I believe the Mohawk camp is close. There is only one thing to do. We must keep moving around until we find it. We will wait here until the next sun comes. Then we will look around some more."

The following day they again scouted carefully through the woods in search of the Mohawk camp. This time, however, they remained together and turned toward the north. Running Fox felt convinced that the village was somewhere in that direction, and as he was the leader Spotted Deer was content to rely upon his judgment.

"I believe there must be a trail going toward that camp," declared Spotted Deer.

"Well, I did not hear our people say anything about it," replied Running Fox.

Nevertheless they determined to keep a sharp watch for anything that looked like an opening

through the forest. They continued toward the north for half of the day, and then Running Fox proposed that they should circle toward the west.

"That will bring us near the place where you saw something that looked like smoke," he told Spotted Deer.

"Well, I am not sure about what I saw, but I believe it would be a good thing to go over there, and look around," said Spotted Deer.

Then for a long time they traveled in silence. Running Fox seemed moody and thoughtful, and Spotted Deer made no attempt to rouse him. The latter realized that a war-leader had many responsibilities, and he felt quite sure that Running Fox was meditating upon some plan for bringing success to his undertaking.

"Spotted Deer, there are two things that trouble me," Running Fox said, finally.

Spotted Deer remained silent. He knew that it would not do to question a war-leader unless the latter chose to enlighten him.

"First I am troubled because I have not found Gokhos, the great white Medicine Owl," continued Running Fox. "If we had the skin of that

mysterious bird I believe much good would come of it. But I am troubled about another thing. Yes, I am troubled about the Shawnees. They have come into this country to fight the Mohawks. It is a bad thing for us. I believe the Mohawks will keep many warriors around the village. Well, now I will tell you something different. I have set out to do this thing, and I am going through with it no matter what happens to me."

"Those are good words," Spotted Deer declared, admiringly. "You will soon find Gokhos, the great white Medicine Owl, and then we will be able to do some great things. I am not thinking about the Shawnees——"

"Stop!" Running Fox interrupted, excitedly. "I see smoke rising behind that ridge."

They saw a misty blue haze drifting above the top of a low ridge directly ahead of them.

"That is the place I was looking at," said Spotted Deer. "Yes, I know it by that big mountain over there."

"I believe we have found the Mohawk camp," declared Running Fox. "We must watch sharp. If the village is on the other side of that ridge

we are very close. Spotted Deer, I believe we are in great danger."

They immediately concealed themselves in the woods to watch. It was not long, however, before both of them agreed that the smoke came from the Mohawk camp. The thought filled them with joy. They believed that they were almost within sight of their goal, and they were eager to verify their hopes. However, Running Fox realized that it would be the height of folly to attempt to look over the ridge before dark. He had little doubt that, if the camp really was on the other side, the crafty Mohawks had stationed scouts along the crest of the ridge to guard the village against surprise. Therefore, he decided to wait until night came to his assistance.

"We must stay here until it gets dark," he told Spotted Deer. "Then we will creep up on that ridge, and find out if the camp is over there."

"I believe we will find it," Spotted Deer replied, confidently.

"Well, that smoke looks like camp smoke, but I am not sure about it," said Running Fox.

CHAPTER XIII

SURPRISED

SHORTLY after dark the impatient young Delawares set out on their perilous search for the Mohawk camp. When they reached the base of the ridge they stopped to listen. Then, as they heard nothing to arouse their suspicions, they climbed carefully up the steep brushy slope. They were almost at the top when Running Fox thought he heard something moving through the bushes. They immediately dropped and lay close to the ground. They waited a long time, but nothing appeared. At last they decided that they had been needlessly alarmed, and they rose and continued up the ridge.

Once on top the Delawares' first thought was to look for the glow of the Mohawk fires. When they failed to find them they began to lose hope. It was evident that the Mohawk camp was not where they had expected to find it.

"I do not see what I expected to find—it is bad," whispered Spotted Deer.

Running Fox made no reply. He appeared to be listening.

"That smoke must have been another signal," said Spotted Deer.

Running Fox still continued silent. He sat with his bow across his knees, staring moodily into the night. Having been unable to draw him into conversation, Spotted Deer, too, subsided into silence and waited patiently for Running Fox to announce a plan of action.

They sat there for a long time, and then they were suddenly roused by the sound of a dog barking somewhere near the spot where they had looked for the Mohawk camp. Running Fox instantly became alert. Cautioning Spotted Deer to silence, he listened eagerly. In a few moments the barking changed to sharp cries of pain, and it was evident that the animal had been cowed into silence. Then for a long time all was still.

"Now I know what I came here to find out," said Running Fox. "My ears have told me what my eyes could not see. Spotted Deer, the great

Mohawk camp is down there where we heard that dog."

"Where are the fires?" demanded Spotted Deer.

"Perhaps there are no fires," replied Running Fox. "Perhaps they are hidden by the trees. Perhaps the camp is closed in by high stakes. I do not know how it comes that we cannot see the fires, but I believe the camp is there."

"Then we will go down there and find it," Spotted Deer proposed, impulsively.

"No, I have a different plan," Running Fox told him. "I am going down there alone. I will look around. Then I will come back and tell you about it. You must wait here."

"Running Fox, that is not a good thing to do," protested Spotted Deer. "I must go with you. Perhaps you will get into a fight down there. Yes, I must be there to help you."

"Spotted Deer, I am the leader," Running Fox reminded him. "I am doing this thing because it is the best way to go about it. If we both go down there and get caught then there will be no chance to get away. If I go down there alone and get caught then you must get me out of it. I

will not go into the camp without you, but I must go and look around. It is the only way to do. I will not talk any more about it."

"Running Fox, you say that you are the leader, it is true," replied Spotted Deer. "Yes, I will do what you tell me to do. I believe it is the best way."

"That is good," said Running Fox. "Now I will tell you something different. If anything bad happens to me down there I will make the call of Quenischquney, the panther. If you hear that then you must come down there and do what you can. But perhaps you will get into danger. Then you must make the call of Quenischquney. Then I will come to help you. Now I am going away."

"I will keep singing the sacred songs to help you," said Spotted Deer.

"Yes, that will be a good thing to do," agreed Running Fox.

A moment later he disappeared into the night. Running Fox moved down the ridge with great caution, for he felt quite sure that Mohawk sentinels were somewhere within bow-shot of him. He stopped many times to listen, but heard noth-

ing to alarm him. When he reached the bottom of the ridge he turned directly toward the place where he had heard the dog barking. As he advanced he kept a sharp watch for the warning glow of the Mohawk fires. The forest was very dense, however, and as he believed that the Mohawk village might be walled about by a log stockade he had little hope of discovering the fires. Then he thought of a better plan. Moistening one of his fingers, he raised it above his head and learned that what little wind there was came from the north. As he was traveling almost due west, he made a wide detour to get the wind in his face. Soon afterward he saw the value of the wily maneuver, when the unmistakable odor of smoke was borne to his nostrils. It filled him with joy, for he realized that at last he had found an easy trail to the hostile camp.

Running Fox followed the tell-tale smoke scent with the eager persistence of a famished wolf. As long as the breeze held steady he hurried along with little fear of going astray. However, when the wind weakened, or shifted, his task became more difficult. Under those conditions he invari-

ably lost the trail, and was compelled to circle about until he found it. Thus he felt his way toward his goal, until at last he was halted by the familiar sounds from the camp itself. He stopped and raised his eyes to Getanittowit.

"O Getanittowit, I have come near to the camp of my enemies, the proud and boastful Mohawks," whispered Running Fox. "O Getanittowit, I am in great danger. O Getanittowit, make me as sharp as Woakus, the fox, and as brave as Machque, the bear. O Getanittowit, take pity on me and help me."

Having made this earnest appeal to Getanittowit, the Great One, the devout young Delaware resumed his daring advance toward the Mohawk camp. As he neared it the sounds increased, and he knew that the village contained many people. The thought made him more cautious, and he stopped to reconnoiter. Running Fox felt sure that he was within a few bow-shots of the village, and yet he could see no trace of it. He scouted cautiously through the woods looking for it, but although the sounds warned him that the camp

was dangerously close at hand the night effectually hid it from his sight.

"This comes of not following the advice of Gokhus, the Medicine Owl," the superstitious young Delaware told himself. "Gokhus is the only one who can see through the dark. Yes, if I had the skin of the great white Medicine Owl I believe I would be able to see this camp."

Nevertheless he determined to continue looking for the Mohawk village. He knew that to come within sight of the camp he must run the risk of capture and death, but he felt little fear. He believed that Getanittowit would help him, and the assurance gave him courage. He advanced, therefore, with every faculty keenly alert, determined to actually see the hostile camp before he thought of turning back.

Running Fox was moving slowly through the woods when he suddenly found himself on the edge of a large clearing. Corn and squashes were growing there, and the Delaware instantly realized that he had found the Mohawk camp. The thought set his heart beating wildly. Then he heard a number of persons chanting a song, and

looking toward the sound he saw a long high shadow stretching across one side of the clearing. He knew at once that it was a log stockade enclosing the camp. He saw a pale yellow glow above it, and he believed it came from the Mohawk fires.

Having finally got within arrow-range of his goal, Running Fox shrank back into the shadows of the forest, and looked upon the great Mohawk camp with awe. For a moment or so it frightened him, and he found himself trembling with nervousness. It looked like a huge trap from which it would be hard to escape. The thought weakened his confidence. He heard a dog barking, and he wondered if it had caught his scent. He raised a moistened finger into the air to test the wind. It was in his favor, and he felt much relieved. A few moments afterward a small square of light appeared in the long black wall. Something black flashed across it, and then the light vanished into the night. Running Fox was perplexed. He wondered if it had been a signal of some sort. Perhaps he had been discovered. The possibility brought sweat to his brow. For an instant he

thought of retreating. However, the very suggestion filled him with shame. He asked himself if Running Fox, the son of the great war-chief, Black Panther, were a coward.

"No, I will not run away," he whispered, savagely. "I will stay here, and see what is going to happen to me."

Then, as he continued to watch the grim black outline of the stockade, the square of light again appeared, and this time it was some moments before it vanished. In the meantime a number of dark objects had flashed across it. Running Fox was unable to explain it. It seemed as if it must be a signal to some one outside of the village. Still he could not understand how it was done. He knew that there was no fire outside of the stockade, else he would have seen the glare. Then where did the light come from, and what made it? For a long time Running Fox was unable to guess. At last, however, the truth flashed across his mind.

"Hi, now I know about it," he told himself. "There is a hole in that log wall. Yes, some one pulled something away, and made it open. Then some one moved something across that place.

Then some one closed it up again, and made it dark. Pretty soon some one opened it again. Then some one moved something across that place many times. Perhaps it was a signal."

Having guessed that much, it was only a few moments until the sharp-witted young scout learned the full truth. He realized that the opening must have been an entrance or door into the village, and that the mysterious black objects which had momentarily shut out the light were people either entering or leaving the camp. That, however, was the only point about which he had any doubt. He would have given much to know whether the people who had passed through the opening were warriors returning from the war-trail, or scouts going out to look for the enemy. Then, as a great commotion suddenly broke out in the camp, Running Fox believed that the answer had been given by the Mohawks themselves.

"Yes, I believe some warriors have come back from the fight with the Shawnees," said Running Fox.

Each moment the noise increased, and it was evident that a celebration of some sort was in prog-

ress. Then the glow above the stockade brightened, and Running Fox believed that the fires were being rekindled in preparation for some important ceremony. The thought pleased him, for he believed that with the Mohawks absorbed in celebrating a victory, it would be easier to approach the village. Having discovered the entrance into the camp, the reckless lad resolved to have at least one peep at his foes before he returned to Spotted Deer.

Running Fox waited until the noise indicated that the celebration was well in progress, and then he moved toward the camp. He had carefully noted the location of the opening in the stockade, but he feared to approach it, for he knew that at any moment he might encounter some one leaving the village. He turned toward the end of the stockade, therefore, and was almost within leaping distance of the camp when he was halted by a challenge directly behind him. Acting upon the impulse of the moment, Running Fox stopped for an instant, and mumbled an unintelligible reply. Then, as the night hid the person who had hailed him, he tried to hurry away. He planned to

dodge around the end of the stockade and dash into the woods. The ruse failed, however, for the suspicious Mohawk followed him. Aware that further attempts to deceive would be useless, Running Fox ran off at great speed. The Mohawk immediately raced after him, yelling at the top of his voice.

As Running Fox dodged around the end of the stockade he crashed into two Mohawks who were running up at the call of their tribesman. The surprise was mutual, and all three fell to the ground. A moment afterward the young Delaware found himself lying helplessly upon his back with two stalwart warriors holding him down. As he attempted to shout a warning to Spotted Deer one of the Mohawks seized him by the throat and began to choke him unmercifully. However, Running Fox had no idea of surrendering. He fought with the fury of a wildcat until one of his foes struck him a stunning blow on the head with a war-club.

When the lad regained his senses some moments later he found himself surrounded by a number of Mohawk warriors. His arms had been tightly

bound behind him, and a heavy piece of buckskin had been tied over his mouth. As Running Fox opened his eyes, the warrior who had choked him kneeled and glared fiercely into his face. Then he seized him roughly by the shoulder, and motioned for him to rise. As the Delaware obeyed the Mohawks crowded excitedly about him, peering eagerly into his face, and threatening him with their weapons. Running Fox showed no fear, however, and in a few moments they ceased tormenting him and led him into the camp.

The Mohawk village was lighted by several large fires, and Running Fox saw a great many people gathered in the center of the camp. They were mostly women and children, with a small company of old men and guards who had been left behind to protect the village when the warriors had rushed out at the cry of alarm. As Running Fox was led into the firelight the Mohawks quickly recognized him as a Delaware, and immediately began to taunt and abuse him. The old women and the boys were particularly vicious, and several of the latter ran up and began to beat him with sticks. The Delaware's eyes flashed threateningly, but he

knew better than to resist for he realized that it would only expose him to still harsher treatment from his tormentors.

When Running Fox and his guards reached the center of the village they were beset by a great throng of people who seemed intent upon reaching the prisoner. They appeared so hostile that the Delaware feared they intended to kill him there and then. They surged wildly about him shouting their war-cries, and striking at him over the shoulders of his guards. The latter were struggling valiantly to protect him, but it looked as if they would be overpowered at any moment. At the height of the tumult, however, Running Fox saw several warriors hurrying forward from the other end of the camp. As they approached, the foremost warrior called out, and at the sound of his voice the Mohawks immediately fell back. It was evident that the warrior was a man of great authority, and Running Fox wondered if it could be Standing Wolf, the famous Mohawk war-chief.

A few moments afterward the Mohawk stood before him. He was a tall, broad-shouldered man of middle age, with a cruel face and restless black

eyes. For a moment Running Fox felt afraid of him. Then, as the Mohawk looked searchingly into his face, the lad suddenly remembered that he must uphold the honor of his tribe. He raised his head and met the challenge unflinchingly. They gazed steadily at each other for several moments, and the vast assemblage of Mohawks watched them in silence. Then the Mohawk laughed scornfully, and turned to his people. He addressed them in a few sharp sentences, and his words were received with what seemed to be expressions of approval. At any rate the Mohawks made no further demonstrations against the prisoner, and Running Fox wondered whether the warrior had spoken in his behalf. It seemed too much to expect, however, and the young Delaware feared that his relief was only the prelude to a more trying ordeal yet in store for him. Then he saw the man whom he took to be Standing Wolf, talking to the three warriors whom Running Fox had encountered outside of the camp. A moment later one of them approached him, and untied the buckskin bandage which had been placed over his mouth. For an instant Running Fox was

tempted to shout a warning to Spotted Deer. Upon second thought, however, he abandoned the idea. He doubted that Spotted Deer would hear it, and besides, he believed it would be foolish to acquaint the Mohawks with the fact that he had a companion. In the meantime the Mohawk leader had again approached him. Running Fox was greatly astounded to hear him speak in the Delaware dialect.

"Do the boastful Delawares send boys to fight their enemies?" he inquired, sarcastically.

Running Fox made no reply.

"Well, do Delaware children remain silent when they are spoken to?" the Mohawk demanded, angrily. "I do not like that. When Standing Wolf speaks he must be answered. Come, speak fast or I will teach you how to obey."

"I will answer you," Running Fox said, angrily. "Standing Wolf, you have asked me something. Well, I will tell you what you wish to know. My people keep their men to fight the brave Shawnees. My people send their boys to kill the Mohawks."

It was a reckless speech, and Running Fox im-

mediately realized that he had sealed his doom as he looked into the angry eyes of Standing Wolf. For a moment the great Mohawk war-chief looked upon him in unconcealed amazement. Then he mumbled something, and advanced threateningly. Running Fox showed no signs of weakening, however, and Standing Wolf struck him a stinging blow across the mouth. It was the signal for a wild outbreak from the onlookers, for they realized that their famous war-chief had been insulted by a mere lad. The thought drove them into a frenzy, and only the prompt interference of Standing Wolf himself saved the Delaware from instant torture and death. When he had quieted the people, the Mohawk chief called several trusted warriors to lead Running Fox away.

The unhappy lad was taken to a square bark lodge or shack. It contained a single room or compartment, and appeared dark and uninhabited. Once inside the building, the Mohawks threw Running Fox to the ground and bound his feet, which until that moment had been free. Then they left him.

The two guards had barely gone from hearing

when Running Fox heard something stirring over in a corner of the lodge. However, darkness made it impossible to tell what it was. He listened anxiously, and finally thought he heard some one chanting a medicine-song. It was low and indistinct, but still there was something about it that sounded familiar. A few moments later Running Fox identified it as one of the songs which he had learned from old Sky Dog, the Delaware medicine-man. Then the startling truth suddenly confronted him.

"Spotted Deer!" Running Fox cried in a tense whisper.

"Yes, Running Fox, I am here," replied Spotted Deer. "This is very bad. Now I know that there is no chance for us."

CHAPTER XIV

ANXIOUS DAYS

SPOTTED DEER said that he had been surprised and captured soon after Running Fox left him. At first the Mohawks mistook him for a Shawnee, and his appearance in the camp was the occasion for a wild commotion. He was taken to the center of the village and tied to the torture stake. Then the Mohawks suddenly discovered that he was a Delaware. They seemed greatly surprised, and it was evident that they feared the presence of a Delaware war-party somewhere near the camp. Thinking to frighten the young captive into telling them what they wished to know, Standing Wolf threatened him with all sorts of terrible tortures if he refused to give the information they desired. However, Spotted Deer scorned the threats, and the Mohawks were unable to make him talk. At last they unbound him, and threw him into the lodge in which Running Fox so unexpectedly found him.

"Now I have told you how I came here," concluded Spotted Deer.

"Well, I see that you could not help it, but it is very bad," replied Running Fox.

Then he related his own experiences. When he told how he had defied the great Mohawk war-chief, Spotted Deer exclaimed in astonishment.

"That was a foolish thing to do," he declared.

"Yes, I see that I did a bad thing," acknowledged Running Fox. "I believe I will be killed, but you may live to get away and tell our people what they wish to know."

"No, Running Fox, I believe the Mohawks will kill me, too," said Spotted Deer.

At that moment Running Fox thought he heard some one moving cautiously away from the entrance of the lodge, and he feared that spies had been stationed there to listen. The Delawares immediately ceased talking. They lay there a long time listening, but all was still. The night-hush had fallen upon the camp, and it was evident that the Mohawks had retired to their lodges. However, the lads felt quite sure that the entrance to their own lodge was closely guarded. Still it

seemed like an unnecessary precaution, for they had been so skillfully bound that they would have been unable to escape even if the way had been open.

Left to their thoughts, the lads immediately began to speculate upon their chances. Running Fox believed that for himself at least death was inevitable, and he tried to become reconciled to the thought. However, his great fear was that by antagonizing the Mohawk chief he had also sealed the fate of Spotted Deer. The possibility filled him with despair. If only Spotted Deer might be spared to eventually learn and carry away the secret which had brought them to the Mohawk camp, Running Fox would have been willing to suffer and die without complaining. Now, however, he believed that his sacrifice would be in vain. The idea drove him into a frenzy. Carried away by emotion, he fought desperately to free himself from his bonds. His efforts were useless, however, and he soon saw the folly of wasting his strength, for the present escape seemed impossible.

"It is no use to fight that way," Spotted Deer

told him. "No, we must wait until we get a better chance."

"That is true," agreed Running Fox.

The long night finally passed, and as day dawned the lads looked anxiously about the lodge to learn if they were guarded. They appeared to be alone, but they mistrusted that sharp-eared sentinels were just outside the entrance. However, the lads took advantage of their privacy to study the details of their prison. It was a square, one story structure about four bow-lengths high. It was made of slabs of bark which were held in place by two rows of upright saplings or poles. The roof, which was peaked, was also of bark, and had a small square opening in the center to let out the smoke of the camp-fire. The lads found themselves in a room about four bow-lengths square, with a shallow fire-pit in the middle, and low willow bunks or platforms along two sides. The lodge would have accommodated six or eight persons, and was similar in design and material to those erected by the Delawares. It showed no signs of recent occupancy.

It was not long before the Delawares heard

some one approaching. Their hearts quickened at the sound, for it suggested a number of disturbing possibilities. Then the robe which covered the doorway was drawn aside, and a warrior entered the lodge. He was a great powerful fellow, and he stared so fiercely at the captives that they felt quite sure he meant them no good. They returned his glances without wavering, and in a few moments he turned and called to some one outside. An aged woman answered the summons, and the lads saw that she brought food and water.

The warrior kneeled and unbound their hands. Then the old woman placed meat and water before them, and hobbled away. The guard, however, instantly began to annoy them. Pointing at the bones and scraps of meat which had been set before them, he imitated the whining of a dog, and laughed boisterously. The Delawares knew that he was trying to make them understand that they had been fed with the leavings from the camp which ordinarily were given to the dogs. The lads gave no sign that they comprehended the insult. Realizing that refusal to eat the food might subject them to a brutal attack, they consumed it in

sullen obedience. Then they looked expectantly toward the Mohawk. He was laughing and making significant gestures with his knife to make them realize the punishments that awaited them. They watched him without the slightest trace of emotion. Their indifference seemed to anger him, and he began to talk fiercely in the Mohawk dialect. The lads showed plainly that they did not understand his threats, and he suddenly seemed to realize that he was making himself ridiculous. A moment afterward he tied their hands behind them, and drew the buckskin thongs deep into the flesh. Then he laughed gleefully, and left the lodge.

"That warrior is very fierce," said Spotted Deer, as the footfalls died away.

"Well, he did not frighten us," boasted Running Fox.

"That made him mad," laughed Spotted Deer.

It was not long before they began to feel the effects of his cruelty. The tight buckskin thongs ate slowly into their flesh, and caused them great agony. However, they bore it in silence. Each knew what the other was enduring, but neither of

them was willing to acknowledge that the Mohawk had made him suffer.

As the day progressed they heard considerable noise and confusion in the camp, and they believed that the Mohawks were preparing for some important ceremony. The thought filled them with gloomy premonitions. Running Fox, especially, read a warning in the sounds. He knew that his bold defiance of the famous war-chief would not be permitted to pass unpunished, and he feared that at any moment he would be called out to pay the penalty. He had heard many stories about the awful tortures which the Mohawks inflicted upon their prisoners, and he wondered if he were about to experience them. The possibility tried his nerve.

"Running Fox, what I hear makes me feel bad," Spotted Deer said, uneasily. "Perhaps the Mohawks are getting ready to kill us."

"We must be brave," Running Fox told him.

Soon afterward several fierce looking warriors entered the lodge, and stared at the captives. However, they made no attempt to annoy them, and left without speaking. The lads were at a

loss to explain the visit. Then other warriors came, and several women and children. As none of the visitors showed any inclination to harm them, the Delawares felt somewhat reassured. They knew that the Iroquois tribes often adopted young warriors whom they captured, and they wondered if they, too, were to be spared. The thought gave them hope, for while they would not have thought of pledging allegiance to their foes, still they believed that they might be able to turn the opportunity to good advantage.

"Yes, we will fool the Mohawks until we find a chance to get away," whispered Spotted Deer.

"They are sharp," Running Fox warned him.

Then they heard criers going about the camp calling the people to assemble. Their fears immediately returned. They listened anxiously as the Mohawks began to sing, and shout their war-cries. Then the noise suddenly ceased. The Delawares heard some one talking excitedly. They thought they recognized the voice of Standing Wolf, the Mohawk war-chief. At the end of the talk a great shout went up from the camp.

"I do not like that," said Running Fox. "I

believe some one is turning the Mohawks against us."

"Perhaps they are talking about something different," Spotted Deer replied, hopefully. "Perhaps a war-party is going out to fight the Shawnees."

"No, I do not believe it," said Running Fox. "Spotted Deer, I believe we will soon be killed."

However, no one came to disturb them until the end of the day, and then the warrior and the old woman again entered the lodge with food and water. When the Mohawk unbound their wrists the lads found that they had temporarily lost the use of their arms. They made several attempts to reach the food that had been placed before them, but for some moments they were unable to raise their hands from their sides. The Mohawk seemed to take great delight in their discomfort. He jeered, and laughed, and insisted upon their eating the food. The lads feared that if they were unable to comply with his demands he would take away the food, and tell the Mohawks that they had refused it. They made heroic efforts, therefore, and finally succeeded in getting the food to

their mouths. Then the guard again bound their wrists, and left them to suffer.

As the evening shadows fell upon the camp the Delawares once more heard sounds of bustling activity. The Mohawks were breaking wood for fires, and the lads felt a vague premonition of danger. In a few moments they heard the crackling of the flames, and saw the light through the hole in the roof of the lodge. They waited in anxious suspense.

"Pretty soon we will know what is going to happen to us," said Running Fox. "Do you feel brave?"

"I believe we are in great danger, but I am not afraid," replied Spotted Deer.

An ominous hush had fallen upon the camp. Then the covering was drawn from the doorway of the lodge, and three warriors entered. The lads knew at once that these men had been sent to get them, and they feared that their hour of trial was at hand. For a moment they weakened. Then as the Mohawks came toward them, they recovered their courage, and waited calmly to learn their fate.

"Be brave," said Running Fox.

"I am a Delaware," Spotted Deer replied, proudly.

One of the Mohawks stooped and freed Running Fox from his bonds.

Then they motioned for him to rise. It was evident that they had no intention of taking Spotted Deer. The latter struggled furiously to rise and accompany his friend, but the Mohawks laughed and pushed him back.

"Keep still," said Running Fox. "You must keep alive to finish this thing. I am not afraid to die. Tell my father those words."

Before he had finished speaking the Mohawks were leading him toward the door of the lodge. He walked with difficulty, however, for his legs had been so tightly bound that circulation had been entirely stopped. Each step was agony, but the courageous lad fought hard to conceal his suffering. As he was pushed roughly from the lodge he heard Spotted Deer frantically singing the medicine-songs which old Sky Dog had taught him. Running Fox wondered whether they would save him in the present emergency.

Running Fox saw the Mohawks gathered about a great fire in the center of the camp. They greeted his appearance with a wild outburst of yells, and he realized that he could expect no mercy. His guards led him toward the fire, and stood him with his back against a stout stake, a short distance from the flames. Then Standing Wolf and a number of important looking warriors walked up to him. For some moments they stared at him in silence, and Running Fox looked fearlessly into their eyes. He knew only too well the severity of the punishment which was about to be inflicted upon him, but he determined to endure it without flinching. He felt that the honor of his tribe was at stake, and the thought gave him courage. The last trace of fear had left him, and he found himself calm and unafraid. In a few moments he heard the Mohawk chief addressing him in the Delaware tongue.

"Well, you were very boastful when you came here; do you feel brave now?" demanded Standing Wolf.

"A Delaware is always brave," replied Running Fox.

"Well, we will see about it," Standing Wolf declared, warningly.

He turned and spoke a few words to the warriors behind him, and Running Fox saw them smile contemptuously. Then Standing Wolf began to address the great throng of people who had gathered about the fire. His speech seemed to greatly excite them, and when he finished they began to shout, and jeer, and threaten the captive. However, Standing Wolf and his escort kept them in control. Then the chief spoke to the warriors who had brought Running Fox from the lodge, and they immediately bound the lad to the stake.

"Young man, you are about to see how the Mohawks treat their enemies," said Standing Wolf. "You, alone, are to blame for whatever happens to you. You are young, and I might have saved you. But you talked very boastful. Yes, you have made my heart black against you. Now you must pay for it."

Running Fox remained silent. There was nothing to say. He realized that he had blundered, and that the blunder was to cost him his life.

Standing Wolf gave the signal, and a noisy com-

pany of women and boys formed about the prisoner, while the warriors looked on. Then several old men raised their voices in a weird chant, and the Mohawks began to dance about the post. Running Fox saw that they were armed with supple willow wands or whips, and he easily imagined what they intended to do with them. They beat him unmercifully, but he endured it without a tremor. Many diabolical old women tried to blind him by striking him across the eyes, but he foiled them by slightly raising his head so that the blows fell short. Standing Wolf and his warriors looked on with sullen indifference, and Running Fox wondered if they intended to have him beaten to death. Not until many of the women had exhausted themselves did the Mohawk chief finally interfere, and stop them. Then he again confronted the prisoner.

"Have you any words now?" he inquired scornfully.

Running Fox was covered with welts and gashes, but his eyes flashed as defiantly as ever. He ignored the taunt, and remained silent.

"Well, I see that you are afraid to speak," said

Standing Wolf. "When your mouth is closed your ears must be open. Listen to what I am about to say. What you have just gone through is only the beginning of what is going to happen to you. The women and boys have beaten you. Now we will show you something different."

When Standing Wolf finished speaking he called to the warriors, and they formed a great circle about the prisoner. Most of them carried knives and war-clubs, but a few had bows and arrows. When they had taken their places Standing Wolf pointed at Running Fox, and spoke briefly in a fierce tone. What he said seemed to rouse the Mohawks to a fury, and as soon as he finished they began to dance wildly about the captive.

"O Getanittowit, help me," whispered Running Fox. "O Getanittowit, make me strong."

As they danced past the stake each warrior crouched and yelled fiercely into the ears of the erect young Delaware. Several struck him across the face with their open palms, but he gave no evidence that he felt the blows. Convinced that he was about to receive the full fury of the hatred

which the Mohawks held for his people, Running Fox resolved to die like a hero. The Mohawks were rapidly rousing themselves into a frenzy. They had drawn their knives, and were making vicious passes within a few inches of his body. Some who carried war-clubs rushed forward and struck the post within a handbreadth of his head. Running Fox bore it all without flinching.

Then Standing Wolf once more interrupted the proceedings. This time, however, he did not address the prisoner, but called several of his escort aside and began to talk earnestly. A number of fiendish old women immediately took advantage of the opportunity to attack the prisoner. They rushed upon him with their sticks, and began to beat him over the head and shoulders. Standing Wolf saw them, however, and promptly ordered them to stop. A moment or so afterward he spoke to the warriors. Running Fox watched him closely. He was unable to guess whether Standing Wolf was talking for or against him. The Mohawks received his words in silence, and the Delaware imagined he read disappointment in many of the faces. At the conclusion of the talk

two warriors left the circle, and approached the prisoner. They stopped in front of him, and one drew his knife. He stood a moment staring fixedly into the eyes of Running Fox. The great crowd of Mohawks watched in ominous silence. Standing Wolf was standing with his arms folded across his breast, smiling grimly. Running Fox felt that his end was at hand, and he straightened proudly to receive the knife-thrust in his heart. A murmur of approval rose from the Mohawks. Many moments passed. Still the warrior hesitated to carry out his command. Running Fox felt himself weakening under the suspense. It was evident that the wily chief was hoping to break down his courage before he killed him. The thought gave the lad new strength. Having endured that far, he determined to maintain his nerve to the end. He waited, therefore, smiling scornfully into the eyes of the warrior who confronted him.

Then the Mohawk darted forward to perform his mission, but instead of driving his knife into the heart of the prisoner he passed behind him, and severed the thongs which bound him to the

stake. A moment afterward two guards led the astounded Delaware back to the lodge in which he had been imprisoned.

"Well, my brother, Getanittowit has listened to the medicine-songs!" Spotted Deer cried, joyfully, as soon as the Mohawks had passed out. "I believed the Mohawks killed you, and I wanted to die. Now my heart is filled with songs. Tell me how you come to be alive."

"I cannot tell you that," Running Fox said, confusedly. "I believed I would be dead by now, and here I am alive. It is very mysterious."

CHAPTER XV

A BATTLE WITH THE CHIPPEWAS

FOR a long time the lads were kept in continual doubt as to whether they were to live or die. Then they unexpectedly found a friend in the young son of one of the Mohawk medicine-men, a man of great influence with Standing Wolf. From that time their uncertainty was set at rest. The young Mohawk made them understand that they were not to be killed. Some time later, when he had learned to express himself in the Delaware tongue, he told why Running Fox had been spared.

The Mohawk said that Standing Wolf had determined to kill Running Fox, but the medicine-man interfered. The latter had had a dream concerning the youthful prisoners, and declared that a great calamity would fall upon the camp if they were put to death. At first Standing Wolf paid little attention to him, and prepared to carry out his revenge. However, at the very moment when

Running Fox was tied to the torture stake misfortunes began to fall upon the camp. First an old man fell and broke his leg. Then a child of one of the women who was participating in the attack on Running Fox died suddenly while the mother was in the act of beating the prisoner. As a climax the medicine-bundle fell from its tripod in the sacred lodge, as the warriors were dancing about the stake. Word of the strange coincidences was instantly carried to the Mohawk chief, and when the alarmed medicine-man himself rushed up and told what had happened to the medicine-bundle even Standing Wolf became filled with superstitious awe, and immediately altered his decision regarding the fate of the captive.

The Delawares showed great interest in the Mohawk medicine-bundle, and asked a number of questions concerning it. They asked in vain, however, for the young Mohawk only shook his head, and pretended to misunderstand them. Fearing that further questioning might arouse his suspicions, they immediately changed the topic of conversation.

Although Standing Wolf had spared the lives

of the Delawares, he used every means in his power to annoy and humiliate them. For a long time he compelled them to go about the village with their hands loosely bound behind them, so that they were powerless to save themselves from the attacks of the women and children whom he made no attempt to restrain. He also kept them on the verge of starvation, and fed them with the most unpalatable scraps from the camp. They were warned that if they approached nearer than a bow-shot to the doorway in the stockade they would be killed by the first person who saw them. As they were constantly watched, and the entrance to the camp was continually closed and barred with massive logs, the lads thought the warning quite unnecessary. Then as the days passed they were permitted to wander more freely about the village. However, they soon realized that to attempt to escape would be the height of folly. Therefore, they continued to cultivate their friendship with the son of the medicine-man in the hope of eventually learning the secret which had brought them upon their mission. With that once in their possession, they had implicit faith that Getanittowit

himself would offer them an opportunity to escape from their foes.

The Delawares had been in the Mohawk camp many days when Winaminge, The-Time-Of-Roasting-Ears, arrived. It was at that season that the Iroquois gathered together to celebrate the Green Corn Festival. Sometimes the various Iroquois tribes celebrated the occasion in their own village, and at other times they traveled to the villages of their nearest tribesmen. Upon this particular occasion, however, it was apparent that the Mohawks intended to observe the festival by themselves. The Delawares watched the preparations with interest, for they were similar to those which they had observed in their own tribe, and they hoped that before the four days' celebration ended they might learn the secret for which they were risking themselves.

In celebrating the Green Corn Festival the ceremonies were begun each day soon after dawn, and ended promptly at midday, or when the sun reached the meridian. It was a festival of thanksgiving to Ha-weu-ne-yu, the Great Spirit, for ripening the corn, beans and squashes. On the day

before the celebration began, the entire tribe gathered in the center of the village to confess their wrong deeds, and promise to live better lives. Strips of white shells, or wampum, were passed from one to another, and each person held it while acknowledging his misdeeds, and pledging himself to a better life in the future. The wampum was believed to record and preserve each pledge. The women and even the older children were required to join in the ceremony. The Delawares, however, were barred from participating, or approaching within hearing distance. They looked on in respectful silence from the door of their lodge.

"Well, we have made the vows," the young Mohawk told them at the conclusion of the ceremony. "When the next sun comes we will begin the celebration."

The lads would have liked to ask him if the mysterious medicine-bundle would appear in the ceremony. They realized, however, that any reference to it might ruin all chance of learning what they wished to know.

"Running Fox, I believe that these people are about to do a great thing," said Spotted Deer. "I

believe Standing Wolf and the medicine-men will have much to do with it. If we watch sharp perhaps we will find out something about the mysterious medicine-bundle that gives this great chief his power."

"Yes, that is true," replied Running Fox. "But we must be very careful. The Mohawks are as cute as Sanquen, the weasel. If they find out what we are after it will be the end of us."

The Green Corn Festival began at dawn the following day. The Delawares were awakened by a number of criers, or couriers, who hurried through the camp calling the people from their lodges. As the lads reached the door of their lodge they saw the Mohawks gathering in the center of the village.

"Come, let us go over there, and see what is going to happen," proposed Spotted Deer.

"Perhaps that will make the Mohawks mad," suggested Running Fox.

"Well, that may be true," replied Spotted Deer. "But I am going to see how near I can get."

A moment afterward they were hurrying toward

the center of the camp. They had not gone far, however, when they encountered a surly looking old woman who instantly challenged them. Pointing toward the lodge which they had just left she made them understand that they were to return at once. To be ordered about by a toothless old woman was a rather humiliating experience for the high tempered young Delawares, especially as they saw a number of warriors looking on with great amusement. For a moment, therefore, the lads held their ground. This drove the old woman into a wild rage, and she immediately seized a stick and began to beat them. Realizing that further resistance might lead to more serious consequences the Delawares began to walk slowly toward their lodge. The old woman was not satisfied, however, and she tried to make them run. A great crowd had gathered to watch her, and the Delawares heard much jeering and laughing at their expense. Carried away by anger, Spotted Deer suddenly wheeled and sprang at his tormentor, yelling so fiercely that the old woman dropped her stick and hobbled away as fast as she could go.

The Mohawks were quick to see the humorous side of the incident, and laughed good naturedly.

"I believe that old woman is a witch," Running Fox declared, angrily, when they reached the lodge. "She made us look foolish. Some time I will kill many Mohawks to wipe that out of my heart."

"She made me very mad," replied Spotted Deer. "Well, I frightened her, and now all the people are laughing about it. We must watch out. She will try to harm us."

Then their thoughts were diverted by the appearance of Standing Wolf and a number of the principal men of the tribe. They stood in the middle of the camp, and the Mohawks formed around them. There was a few moments of silence, and then the Mohawk chief addressed his people. The eyes of the Delawares glowed threateningly as they watched him, for he was a cruel, relentless foe whom they had learned to hate.

"I would like to kill that man," declared Spotted Deer.

"I believe he bears a charmed life," said Run-

ning Fox. "We must find out how he gets his power before we can kill him."

When Standing Wolf had finished speaking he called the father of the lad who had befriended the Delawares, and the medicine-man approached with something wrapped in a small black bearskin. Then he drew off the robe, and presented Standing Wolf with what appeared to be a small bundle of bird and animal skins.

"It is the mysterious medicine-bundle!" Spotted Deer whispered, excitedly.

"Do not talk—watch," Running Fox cautioned him.

They saw Standing Wolf carefully unfasten the wrappings from the medicine-bundle, and remove a skin of the great white Medicine Owl. He held it before him, and raised his face toward the heavens. It was evident that he was chanting a sacred medicine-song. Then he turned toward the four principal points of the compass, and repeated the ceremony. The Delawares watched him with fascinated eyes. They believed that at last the secret of his power had been discovered. Gokhos,

the mysterious white Medicine Owl, was his lucky talisman.

"Now I know why Getanittowit put us in this camp," said Running Fox. "Yes, I have seen the white robe of Gokhos, the Medicine Owl, and I will not go away without it."

"It is wrapped in the mysterious medicine-bundle," Spotted Deer warned him. "Much harm may come to us if we open one of those bundles."

"No, I do not believe it," replied Running Fox. "I must do as it appeared in my dream. Spotted Deer, if we get that mysterious white skin, I believe we will become as great as Standing Wolf."

The thought fired their imagination. They lost all further interest in the Green Corn Festival, and cared only to know into which lodge the medicine-man carried the sacred bundle. They watched patiently until the first day's ceremony ended at midday. Then they sought to keep the medicine-man and his precious burden in sight, but in spite of their best efforts he eluded them in the great throng of Mohawks, and their long vigil ended in bitter disappointment.

"I believe we will find it in the lodge of that medicine-man," declared Spotted Deer.

"No, I believe it is in the lodge of Standing Wolf," said Running Fox.

"Well, if that is true perhaps some bad Medicine Creatures will kill us if we go into the lodge," Spotted Deer suggested, solemnly.

"Well, I cannot help it," replied Running Fox. "When I find out where the mysterious medicine-bundle hangs I am going in to get that skin."

"How will you get away?" inquired Spotted Deer.

"When I have that big medicine thing I will be able to do anything," Running Fox assured him.

The Mohawks devoted the balance of the day to sports and games, and at dark they gathered for the great feast of succotash, which was made of corn, beans and squashes. The food was cooked in large clay urns, or bowls, and each member of the tribe helped himself. Before the people began to eat, however, one of the medicine-men started a weird, melancholy chant, and in a few moments the entire tribe united in a mighty chorus. It was

a song of thanks to the Great Spirit, for supplying their wants. At the end of the simple ceremony, the Mohawks proceeded to enjoy themselves. The Delawares looked on with envious eyes, for in spite of the hilarity and good-will which prevailed at the feast the Mohawks showed no intention of sending any of the food to their captives.

"Perhaps this would be a good time to look for the medicine-bundle," suggested Spotted Deer. "The Mohawks are all together in the middle of the camp, and there will be no one to see us."

"No, we must not go now," Running Fox told him. "If we leave this lodge they will know about it. When we go to look for the medicine-bundle we must know how we are going to get out of the camp."

The Green Corn Festival continued through the three following days, and each night the feast was resumed. The last night, however, was largely given up to a number of sacred dances which the Delawares were not permitted to see. While the dances were in progress the lads were bound, and confined in their lodge. An aged warrior sat in the doorway to prevent them from looking out.

The following day the village was thrown into a turmoil by the return of several Mohawk hunters who said that a large war-party of Chippewas were approaching from the north. The Delawares learned the news from their friend, the son of the medicine-man. He said that the Mohawks expected the Chippewas to attack the village in revenge for the death of a number of Chippewa hunters whom the Mohawks had surprised and killed some time previously.

"Yes, there will be a big fight," declared the Mohawk. "The Chippewas are very fierce, but my people will kill them. My friends, I warn you to be very careful what you do. If you try to get away, or try to help the Chippewas, you will surely be killed."

The Delawares instantly realized the significance of his warning, and they determined to profit by it. They knew that it would be foolhardy to attempt to escape while the camp was besieged by enemies, for it was certain that the entrances and weak spots would be more closely guarded than ever. Besides, they had little doubt that if they should fall into the hands of the Chippewas

the latter would mistake them for Mohawks, and kill them at once.

"This thing is bad for us," said Running Fox. "If this fight goes against the Mohawks they will believe that we have brought bad fortune upon them, and perhaps they will kill us. If the Chippewas break into the village they will kill us for Mohawks. We must do what we can to show the Mohawks that we have nothing to do with it."

The Delawares wisely remained in their lodge, therefore, while the Mohawks prepared for battle. Scouts were immediately sent out to locate the hostile war-party, while a great company of warriors assembled to defend the camp. Standing Wolf and a number of sub-chiefs and medicine-men hurried to the council-lodge.

"Now perhaps we will see how this great chief gets his power," said Spotted Deer.

"We will try to watch him," replied Running Fox.

The day was almost ended when the lads saw the scouts enter the camp. A short time afterward the young Mohawk came to the lodge, and told the Delawares that the Mohawks expected the

Chippewas to attack the village some time during the night or early dawn. He also boasted that his people had gained a notable victory over the Shawnees, and had sent them fleeing toward their own boundaries in a wild panic.

"The foolish Chippewas have come a long distance to get here, but we will soon chase them away," declared the Mohawk lad.

"Perhaps it will not be so easy," suggested Spotted Deer.

"You will see," laughed the young Mohawk.

The Delawares awaited the encounter with considerable impatience. They had been warned against leaving the lodge under penalty of death, and they realized that they would see little of the fight. However, they were determined to see as much as possible, and as soon as it grew dark they seated themselves in the doorway of the lodge. The camp was brightly illuminated to guard against the Chippewas scaling the stockade without being seen. Groups of warriors stood about the barred entrances, and others patrolled the inside of the stockade. Standing Wolf and several noted war-leaders stood in the center of the camp

to give commands. The women and children, and even the dogs, were sheltered in the lodges.

"See, those warriors are talking about us," said Running Fox.

Two of the warriors with Standing Wolf were looking toward the Delawares. In a few moments they spoke to the war-chief, and he, too, looked toward the Delawares.

"We have done a bad thing to show ourselves," Running Fox declared, uneasily.

The next moment they saw Standing Wolf call one of the fighting men, and point at the lodge. The warrior at once turned and walked rapidly toward the Delawares.

"Something is going to happen to us," said Running Fox.

"Come, we will move back into the lodge," proposed Spotted Deer.

"No!" cried Running Fox. "We will not be frightened into our den like rabbits. We have put ourselves here. Well, we will stay here and meet this man."

As the warrior approached them he began to talk fiercely, and point toward the interior of the

lodge. The Delawares had little doubt about his meaning, and yet they made no attempt to comply with his commands. A moment later they realized their folly, for the Mohawk raised his bow and shot an arrow directly between them. It was a hint which they thought it well to accept, and they immediately withdrew into the lodge. The Mohawk entered after them, however, and proceeded to bind their hands and feet. Then, to make matters worse, he tied buckskin bandages over their eyes.

"Well, we have got ourselves into this trouble," Running Fox declared, savagely. "It was foolish to show ourselves to Standing Wolf. Now we will see nothing. If the Chippewas get into the camp we will be killed like Moskimus, the rabbit, when we find him in our traps."

"It is bad," agreed Spotted Deer.

They lay a long time listening for the sounds of battle. An unusual hush had fallen upon the camp, and it was evident that the Mohawks also were listening. Then the notes of Gokhos, the owl, sounded close outside the camp. In a few

moments they heard the logs being drawn from the opening in the stockade.

"One of the scouts has come into the camp to tell about something," said Spotted Deer.

"Listen!" cried Running Fox. "The Chippewas have come."

The melancholy howl of the timber wolf rang through the forest. It rose on four sides of the camp. Then a wild outburst of yells broke forth close to the stockade.

"The fight has begun!" Spotted Deer cried, excitedly.

For some time the Mohawks and their foes contented themselves with shouting defiance at one another. It was evident that the former felt quite secure behind their log stockade, and had no inclination to risk themselves in the open. It was not long, however, before the Delawares heard sounds which led them to believe that the Chippewas intended to force the fighting. They had apparently kindled fires on all side of the stockade in an effort to burn the village. The possibility was somewhat alarming to the helpless young captives in the deserted lodge. Once the stockade caught

fire they knew that it would only be a question of moments before the dry bark lodge would be in flames. However, the noise from the camp indicated that the Mohawks were quick to realize the peril, and the Delawares had little doubt that they would rush out and attempt to extinguish the fires.

"Listen, the Mohawks are on the outside of the camp!" Running Fox cried, a few moments later.

The Delawares heard the fierce Mohawk war-cry ringing through the night on every side of the village, and they knew that a great fight was taking place on the other side of the stockade. The village was in wild disorder. The sounds of battle had alarmed the women and children, and roused the dogs, and all of them added their voices to the din. The camp was lighted by the lurid glare of the flames, while dense clouds of smoke rolled into the lodges. The Delawares feared that some of them had already been set on fire. Then somewhere on the opposite side of the village they heard sounds which set their hearts beating wildly.

"I believe the Chippewas have got into the camp!" declared Spotted Deer. "We will see if the great Standing Wolf can drive them out."

However, in a few moments they heard the triumphant yells of the Mohawks, and they knew that the Chippewas had been forced out or overcome. The fight on the outside of the camp seemed to be raging in undiminished fury. Then there, too, the Mohawk war-cry echoed triumphantly through the night, and the Delawares believed that for the moment at least the Chippewas had been driven off.

"Well, the Mohawks have won a big battle," said Spotted Deer, as the sounds of conflict gradually subsided.

"It is good," declared Running Fox. "Perhaps it will help us. I believe the Chippewas have made a hole into the camp. Perhaps we will be able to crawl out."

Soon afterward they heard the Mohawk war-party entering the village in triumph. They marched noisily about the camp shouting, and singing their war-songs. The Delawares wondered whether they had brought in any prisoners. Then the young Mohawk entered the lodge, and saw the predicament of his friends.

"Hi, my friends, my people have done what I

told you about,'' he cried, as he stooped and took the bandages from their eyes. ''We have killed many Chippewas. All who escaped are running toward their lodges. Standing Wolf ran out and killed three Chippewas at one time. He is a great man. Perhaps this great victory will make his heart good toward you. Perhaps he will let you go. Now I will go, and talk with my father about it. Perhaps he will help you.''

''You are a Mohawk, but you are a good friend,'' Running Fox said, warmly.

While the Delawares had little hope that the fierce Mohawk chief would relent and give them their liberty, still they realized that an appeal in their behalf from one of the powerful Mohawk medicine-men might go a long way toward gaining them sufficient freedom to enable them to escape.

''See, they do not free our hands and feet,'' said Spotted Deer. ''I believe the Chippewas have made an opening into the camp.''

''Well, we must try to do something,'' declared Running Fox. ''Pretty soon it will get light. Then perhaps we can look around, and see what has happened.''

CHAPTER XVI

THE ESCAPE

THE following day the Delawares waited impatiently for an opportunity to venture into the village, and learn the result of the battle. However, the day was more than half gone before any one came to the lodge to free them. Then a warrior came, and unbound them. He made them understand that they might go into the camp, and partake of food.

"This is bad," said Running Fox, as they left the lodge. "The Mohawks kept us tied up until they closed up the place where the Chippewas got in. Now there is no chance to get out."

"Yes, I believe that is true," agreed Spotted Deer.

They found the Mohawks still jubilant over their victory. The lads realized, therefore, that it would be foolish to show themselves too prominently at that time. Many of the younger warriors seemed carried away by the glory of their

first triumph, and the Delawares knew that they would be only too willing to find an excuse for attacking them. For some time the lads had been quite free from annoyance, and they had no desire to lose the privileges which their long stay in the Mohawk camp had brought them.

"Those young men are very fierce," said Running Fox. "We must be very cautious. I believe the best thing to do is to keep away from them."

"Yes, I am watching them," replied Spotted Deer. "We will take some meat, and go back to the lodge."

The Delawares made their way toward the old woman who had brought their food. She was stirring something in a large clay urn which she had propped up among the embers of the cooking fire. When the lads reached her they stopped and waited expectantly. For some time the old woman took no notice of them. Then the warrior who had unbound them shouted some commands, and the woman immediately seized a forked stick and drew a piece of deer meat from the urn. She gave it to the Delawares, and motioned them away. Having learned the folly of opposing those

irritable old scolds, the lads determined to move off at once.

At that moment, however, some of the young Mohawks spied them, and ran forward shaking their weapons, and yelling fiercely. The Delawares immediately stopped and stood at bay. The Mohawks rushed up to them, and tore the meat from the grasp of Spotted Deer. They threw it upon the ground, and kicked it about in the dirt. Then one who appeared to be the leader picked it up, and offered it to Spotted Deer. Before Running Fox could warn him, Spotted Deer seized the meat and hurled it into the face of the young Mohawk.

The next instant the enraged Mohawk and Spotted Deer were glaring furiously into each other's eyes. The Mohawk was only a lad, but he looked considerably older and stronger than the Delaware. However, Spotted Deer showed no fear of him. For a moment it looked as if the friends of the Mohawk were about to take the matter out of his hands by annihilating both of the Delawares. The one who had been insulted, however, warned them against interfering. It was plain that he

intended to avenge the affront without assistance. His friends held back, therefore, watching Running Fox. The latter realized that Spotted Deer must settle the matter alone, but he determined to rush into the fight at the first hint of the Mohawks reinforcing their tribesman.

Word of the impending battle had already been shouted through the camp, and the Mohawks were running toward the spot from all parts of the village. They formed a square about Spotted Deer and his adversary, but showed no inclination to interfere with either of them. Running Fox stood several bow-lengths from his friend, staring defiantly at the young Mohawks.

For some moments the young warriors continued to glare at each other. Each appeared to be trying to frighten the other, but neither seemed much alarmed. Then, as his people urged him on, the Mohawk crouched and began to circle about Spotted Deer, with his war-club in his hand. The Delaware straightened and opened his palms, as he smiled scornfully at his foe. For a moment the Mohawk hesitated. Then he accepted the challenge, and threw down his weapon. A murmur

of approval ran through the Mohawks. Running Fox felt greatly relieved.

The Mohawk continued to circle cautiously about Spotted Deer, looking for an opening. The Delaware, however, was equally alert, and kept turning slowly with his eyes fixed on those of his foe. Several times the Mohawk crouched and pretended he was about to spring in, but each time he found Spotted Deer ready for him. Then for many moments they circled, and dodged, and tried for an advantage, while the Mohawks shouted encouragement to their young tribesman, and Running Fox prayed silently to Getanittowit for the success of Spotted Deer.

Then the Mohawk thought he saw a chance, and sprang forward with the agility and strength of a young panther. However, Spotted Deer had anticipated the attack, and jumped back in time to escape being caught. He wheeled about, and sought to catch his foe, but the Mohawk had already recovered himself and resumed his position of defense. Both lads had given a wonderful exhibition of quickness, and the Mohawks yelled their delight. They began to realize that the Dela-

ware was no mean adversary for his older and larger opponent, and the prospect of a desperate encounter filled them with enthusiasm.

In the meantime Running Fox had remained an impassive spectator. He never for an instant appeared to lose control of himself. To all appearances he was absolutely confident about the outcome of the battle. However, had the Mohawks been able to read his thoughts they would have learned the true state of his feelings. He knew that the impulsive act of Spotted Deer had placed them in a desperate situation, and he foresaw serious consequences. If the young Mohawk should win the encounter, Running Fox realized that they would be made to suffer all sorts of indignities from the younger members of the tribe. On the other hand, if Spotted Deer should vanquish his rival it was equally certain that the Mohawks would find some way of avenging the defeat. Running Fox waited, therefore, prepared to act when the emergency presented itself.

Spotted Deer was quick to realize that the advantage rested with his adversary, and he made no attempt to force the fighting. He had been

thoroughly trained in the art of wrestling, and he determined to remain on the defensive until he had provoked the young Mohawk into exposing himself. The latter, however, appeared to have been equally well schooled in that particular style of combat, and he, too, seemed intent upon waiting for an advantage that would give him an easy victory. For a long time he tried to trick the Delaware by jumping forward as though he were about to grapple with him. It appeared to be a favorite ruse, and he seemed considerably surprised when Spotted Deer refused to be deceived. Then the latter began to laugh at him. It was a daring bit of effrontery which instantly roused the anger of the Mohawk and his tribesmen. The result was exactly what Spotted Deer wished it to be, for the infuriated young Mohawk immediately lost control of himself. Throwing aside his caution, he rushed recklessly upon his foe.

The Mohawk sprang toward Spotted Deer in an effort to seize him by the throat. Spotted Deer dodged and tripped him. Then as the Mohawk stumbled forward the Delaware sprang upon him, and bore him to the ground. The next moment

Spotted Deer found himself upon his back with his foe striving to throttle him. Aware that he was battling for his life, the Delaware fought with the fury of a wildcat. After a few moments of desperate fighting he managed to wriggle free, and rise to his knees. Then the Mohawk again forced him to the ground. This time, however, Spotted Deer found an opening, and locked an arm about the neck of his foe. With his free hand he began to beat the Mohawk fiercely in the eyes. It was the only style of fighting he knew, and his foe was using similar tactics against him. In this primitive mode of fighting there was no thought of fair-play. The same code of honor prevailed among all the tribes, namely to disable or kill an adversary in the quickest possible manner, and to accept punishment and death without flinching. Both young warriors had been trained in that rigorous code, and both were making every effort to live up to its principles.

It soon became apparent that unless the Mohawk speedily broke from the grip of his foe he was doomed. Spotted Deer had forced his head down close to the ground, and was punishing him

without mercy. The Mohawk was fighting furiously to free himself, but Spotted Deer held on with grim determination. It was a desperate battle in which fists, feet and teeth all played a part.

The Mohawks were wild with excitement. They saw their young tribesman in grave danger of defeat, and the thought drove them into a frenzy. They began dancing madly about the fighters, yelling encouragement to the Mohawk, and threatening his foe. Running Fox watched them with great anxiety. He feared that the emergency he had dreaded was at hand.

Spotted Deer was slowly choking the Mohawk into a condition of utter helplessness. He had him entirely at his mercy, and it was plain that he had no idea of sparing him. It was also plain that the Mohawks were about ready to rush to the assistance of their tribesman. At that moment, however, the battle was unexpectedly ended by the father of the lad who had befriended the Delawares. Rushing up to the fighters the medicine-man seized Spotted Deer and pulled him to his feet. For a moment the furious young Delaware seemed about to attack the man who had snatched

away his victory. However, a warning glance from Running Fox told him his peril, and he submitted to the interference. Then the friends of the defeated young warrior rushed toward the Delawares to avenge their tribesman. They were met by the Mohawk medicine-man who dispersed them, and escorted the Delawares to their lodge.

"Hi, that was a great fight," laughed Spotted Deer, when they were safely in the lodge.

"Yes, you were brave enough but you have done a bad thing," said Running Fox. "Now there is no chance for us. Listen, the Mohawks are yelling out there in front of the lodge. Pretty soon we will be taken out there and killed."

They heard a great commotion before the lodge, and they had little doubt that the friends of the vanquished Mohawk were demanding their lives. They knew better than to show themselves. In a few moments the friendly young Mohawk came to them.

"My friends, do you hear that noise?" he asked. "Well, do you know what it means? The young men are very mad. They want to kill you. Do not be afraid. My father and Standing Wolf are

talking to them. Pretty soon they will send them away. You were very brave. Some of my people feel good toward you. But I warn you that you must not do any more fighting. If you do you will surely be killed."

"You have come to us like a good friend," replied Running Fox. "We will keep thinking about your words."

The noise ceased soon after the young Mohawk left them, and the Delawares believed that the disturbers had finally dispersed. It was some time, however, before they thought it wise to show themselves in the doorway of their lodge. Then they saw that the village had apparently become quiet.

Several days later a large company of warriors suddenly left the camp, and the Delawares were glad to see that most of the young men who had annoyed them were members of the party. They wondered if it were a war-party. It seemed unlikely, for the warriors had left the camp without ceremony, and the people showed little interest in their departure.

"I believe they are either hunters or scouts," said Spotted Deer.

"There are too many for scouts," Running Fox told him. "We must try to find out about it. I believe it is a good thing for us. Now the people who troubled us have gone away. There are not many warriors about. It will be a good time to try to do something."

When the young Mohawk came to see them they tried to learn the purpose and destination of the warriors who had left the camp. Their efforts were in vain, however, for the Mohawk professed to know nothing about it. When they continued to question him he grew angry, and left the lodge.

"Now we have done another foolish thing," said Running Fox. "We have made that young man mad. Perhaps he might have helped us. Now he may turn against us."

"No, I do not believe that," Spotted Deer assured him. "He is our friend. He will not do anything to harm us."

"Spotted Deer, we must do something before those young men come back," declared Running Fox. "There are three things to be done. First we must find a way to get out of this camp. Then

we must find something to fight with. Then we must get that mysterious medicine-bundle."

"Those are hard things to do," said Spotted Deer.

"Well, we must do them," replied Running Fox. "When it gets dark, and the Mohawks go to the lodges, I am going to creep around the village and see if there is any way to get out."

"Running Fox, if you do that you will surely be killed," warned Spotted Deer.

"No, I will not get caught," Running Fox assured him.

Late that night Running Fox left the lodge, and stole quietly through the camp until he reached the stockade. It was the first time he had dared to approach it, and as he crept cautiously along in its shadow his heart beat fast with excitement. He knew that if he were discovered it would mean death not only for himself, but for Spotted Deer as well. The thought made him careful. Stealthily, a stride at a time, he moved toward the entrance of the camp. When he finally came near it, he stopped to listen. All seemed safe, however, and he went on. In a few moments he

reached the great barricade of logs that closed the stockade. He spent some time trying to move them, but without result. It was apparent that it would require the united efforts of a number of strong men to open the way into the village. Realizing the folly of wasting his strength, Running Fox turned his attention to the upper part of the stockade. He found that by climbing on top of the logs that formed the barricade he was more than half-way to the top of the stockade. The discovery filled him with delight. He believed that by placing Spotted Deer on the barricade and standing upon his shoulders he might be able to spring up and grasp the top of the stockade. Then he knew it would be possible to draw himself to the top. Once there he felt quite sure that he could reach down, and find a way to rescue Spotted Deer.

When Running Fox returned to the lodge he found that Spotted Deer had disappeared. The discovery filled him with alarm. He wondered what it meant. All sorts of startling possibilities flashed into his mind. However, while he was trying to puzzle it out Spotted Deer appeared.

"Well, what have you done?" Running Fox inquired, sharply.

"I have brought some things to fight with," said Spotted Deer.

He had scouted about the camp, and found two bows, a war-club and a case of arrows. Running Fox listened to the story of his exploit in amazement. Spotted Deer said that he had entered two lodges, and moved cautiously among the sleepers until he found what he wanted. Once he had been compelled to lie in the shadows while a warrior passed within bow-length of him.

"You have been very brave," said Running Fox. "But perhaps the Mohawks will miss these things. Then it may make trouble for us."

"I do not believe anything will come of it," laughed Spotted Deer.

"Well, we must hide them with great care," said Running Fox.

"No, we must not hide them, we must use them," Spotted Deer declared, excitedly. "Running Fox, I have found the mysterious medicine-bundle!"

The announcement so astounded Running Fox that it was some moments before he was able to

speak. The thing seemed impossible. He feared to believe it.

"Spotted Deer, your words have set me shaking like an old man," he stammered. "I know that you have told me what is true, and still I am afraid to believe it."

"What I tell you is true," Spotted Deer assured him. "The mysterious medicine-bundle is hanging in the sacred medicine-lodge."

"How did you know about it?" inquired Running Fox.

"I did not know about it," acknowledged Spotted Deer. "When you went out to look for a way to get out of the camp, I said, 'Now I must do something.' Then I thought about the mysterious medicine-bundle. I wanted to find it. I believed it must be in the sacred lodge. I told you about that. Well, I found the lodge, but I was afraid to go in. Yes, I was afraid of the Bad Spirits that help the Mohawks. Well, I was ashamed about that. I went in. I moved around. I saw the mysterious medicine-bundle hanging on three sticks. Then I heard a noise. Something squeaked like Achpoques, the wood-mouse. I believe it was

a Bad Spirit. Well, I was afraid to touch that mysterious medicine-bundle, because nothing wonderful has ever happened to me. You have seen the Medicine People. Nothing can harm you. Now you must go to the sacred lodge, and carry out the mysterious Medicine Thing that gives Standing Wolf his power over our people. It will soon be light. You must not wait."

Running Fox hurriedly told his plan for escaping from the village. He told Spotted Deer to wait for him near the entrance into the camp. Then he hastened away to secure the sacred medicine-trophy. As Spotted Deer had said, the night was three-quarters gone, and Running Fox knew that there was not a moment to spare. Still he realized that it might be fatal to his chances to postpone the attempt until the following day. He knew, too, that the company of warriors might return at any moment, and he believed that the wisest course would be to take advantage of the opportunity which had presented itself.

As Running Fox saw the outlines of the sacred lodge looming up before him, he stopped and raised his face toward the heavens. He prayed fervently

to Getanittowit to help him in the great thing he was about to attempt. Then he spent some time listening. The camp was still, and he advanced toward the lodge. He had almost reached it when he was stopped by a noise behind him. Some one was approaching. His heart jumped wildly at the thought. Still he determined to stand his ground. Having got that near to the prize, he had no idea of surrendering without a struggle. Spotted Deer had given him one of the bows and a handful of arrows, and he prepared to surprise and attack whoever was stealing upon him under cover of the night.

The moments passed and no one appeared. Running Fox grew impatient. He looked anxiously toward the east and thought he detected the first faint trace of dawn. Each instant he delayed strengthened the chance of failure. The thought made him reckless. He turned to enter the lodge. At that moment he heard a low threatening growl close beside him. Then the truth instantly flashed through his mind. One of the dogs had got his scent. He had been long enough in the camp to win the confidence of the surly wolf-like creatures

that abounded there, and once the dog recognized him he had little fear that it would raise an alarm. Still he determined to take no chances. As it came close to him, growling and sniffing, he drove an arrow through its heart. It fell without a sound. The next moment Running Fox entered the sacred lodge.

Once inside, the lad hesitated, for his heart suddenly became filled with superstitious fear. He had heard many stories about the fierce Medicine-Spirits whom his people blamed for the remarkable success of Standing Wolf and his warriors, and he had little doubt that something terrible was about to happen to him. Then he suddenly recalled the words of Spotted Deer, "You have seen the mysterious Medicine People. Nothing can harm you." The assurance gave him confidence. He believed that to hesitate longer would show lack of faith in Getanittowit, in old Sky Dog and in the powerful Medicine Beings that had appeared in his dream.

Moving carefully toward the rear of the lodge, Running Fox located the tripod of poles which held the mysterious medicine-bundle. For a mo-

ment the Delaware feared to touch it, lest he should be instantly destroyed by some strange Medicine Being. However, the thought of helping his people made him bold, and he reached out and removed the bundle from the poles. Then for some moments he worked feverishly at the fastenings. When the bundle lay open before him his eager eyes quickly discovered the sacred white pelt of Gokhos, the Medicine-Owl. As he finally held it in his hands, the superstitious lad believed that he had suddenly received the power of the famous Mohawk war-chief. Hastily retying the medicine-bundle, he hung it in its accustomed place, and hurried from the lodge.

Running Fox was running toward the stockade when he suddenly encountered some one walking through the camp. They were face to face before either of them realized it, and there was little chance of avoiding recognition. Running Fox tried to withdraw into the night, but the Mohawk jumped forward and peered intently into his face. He identified him at once. Running Fox tried to use his bow, but the Mohawk was too close. He seized the Delaware, and shouted to rouse the

camp. He was a large, powerful man, but Running Fox was too quick for him. He jabbed an arrow directly into his face, and as the Mohawk shrank back the lad wrenched himself free and darted toward his goal.

"Jump up there!" shouted Running Fox, when he reached Spotted Deer.

They climbed nimbly to the top of the log barricade that closed the entrance to the village, and then Running Fox clambered upon the shoulders of Spotted Deer. The camp was in a wild turmoil, and they knew it was only a question of moments before the Mohawks would be upon them. Running Fox found that he was almost a bow-length from the top of the stockade. The distance was greater than he had expected to find it, and for a moment he lost hope. Then, as he realized what it would mean to fail, he sprang frantically upward. His fingers closed about the tops of the logs, and he struggled furiously to hold fast. For a moment or so it seemed as if he must slip back. Then he found a toe-hold against one of the logs, and improved his grip on the top of the stockade.

The next moment he had drawn himself to the top.

"The Mohawks are here, jump down and save yourself," cried Spotted Deer.

Running Fox took no heed of the warning. Instead he lay across the top of the stockade, and reached down to rescue Spotted Deer.

"Jump up, I will help you!" he shouted.

A moment later they had clasped hands, and Spotted Deer was struggling desperately to reach the top of the stockade. Arrows were already whizzing past them, but as yet the darkness had saved them from harm. Once Spotted Deer had gained the top of the stockade in safety, they turned about and dropped to the ground on the outside of the camp. They heard the Mohawks struggling frantically with the logs that closed the doorway.

"Come, we must run fast!" cried Running Fox, as he dashed for the woods.

"I will follow you," replied Spotted Deer.

Then they heard a wild babel of sounds behind them, and they knew that the Mohawks were rushing from the camp. Above the tumult sounded

the fierce cry of Nianque, the lynx, the danger signal of the Mohawks. It seemed to come from the top of the stockade, and the Delawares believed that the Mohawks were sending a warning to the warriors who had left the camp earlier in the day.

CHAPTER XVII

PURSUED BY THE ENEMY

THE Delawares bounded through the woods like frightened deer, for they knew that the Mohawks were close at their heels. Then they heard something that filled them with dread. The dogs were baying fiercely on their trail.

"Listen, the Mohawks have sent their dogs after us," Running Fox cried, savagely. "They will follow us like wolves. It will be hard to get away."

"Well, if they come up with us, we will stop and kill them," said Spotted Deer.

"We have few arrows," Running Fox warned him.

"Perhaps we will not need them," replied Spotted Deer. "These dogs have seen us there in that camp many days. Perhaps when they find out who we are they will not trouble us."

"That may be true," Running Fox agreed, hopefully.

They noted that the savage baying had already grown weaker in volume, and they believed that most of the dogs had abandoned the chase, and were barking from the edge of the camp. There were some, however, that seemed intent upon overtaking the fugitives. In fact it was only a few moments before the lads heard them bounding through the undergrowth a short distance behind them. Realizing that flight would only invite an attack, the lads instantly stopped and waited for the dogs to come up with them.

"Here they are—watch sharp!" cried Running Fox.

The next moment four great wolf-like creatures overtook them. As the lads faced them and ordered them off the curs seemed to recognize them. They circled cautiously about them, sniffing and bristling, but showed no disposition to attack. There was one, however, that suddenly grew threatening as the Delawares attempted to resume their flight. It snarled viciously, and rushed toward Spotted Deer. He waited until it came within arm's reach, and cracked its skull with the Mohawk war-club.

"Now we will get away," he laughed, as the other dogs drew their tails between their legs and scurried toward the village.

Without the help of the dogs the Mohawks soon blundered from the trail, and it was not long before the lads heard them signaling on all sides of them. What disturbed them was the fact that some of the Mohawks seemed to be ahead of them. They could scarcely believe that their foes had actually passed them, and they wondered if it might not be some of the warriors who had left the camp early in the day.

"The Mohawks have surrounded us," Spotted Deer said, uneasily.

"No, I am not afraid about that," replied Running Fox. "They have lost the trail, and they are scattering to find it. If we watch sharp we will get by them."

When it grew light the lads began to look for certain landmarks which they had fixed in their memory. They planned to skirt the edge of the lake where they had blundered into the Shawnees, and then make directly toward the river. As the day progressed and they continued to avoid their

foes they began to feel more confident. Running Fox had little doubt that the skin of the great white Medicine Owl was beginning to exert its power.

"When the Mohawks find out that we have taken away the skin of Gokhos I believe they will be afraid to follow us," said Spotted Deer.

"No, I feel different about it," replied Running Fox. "When Standing Wolf finds out what we have done I believe he will bring a great war-party to fight us. Yes, I believe he is already on our trail. We must travel fast to warn our people."

The sun was disappearing behind the western hills when the Delawares finally reached the northern end of the lake. They had traveled at top speed ever since their escape from the camp, and they were tired and hungry. Nevertheless they feared to stop. They had little doubt that at least some of the Mohawks were close behind them, and they knew it might be fatal to sacrifice even part of their lead.

"We must keep going," Running Fox said, grimly. "If the Mohawks do not come up with us

pretty soon I believe they will begin to hold back."

They continued along the shore of the lake, and had gone about half of its length before night finally overtook them. Then a big red moon rose, and flooded the forest with its light. It blazed a broad silver trail across the water, and as they watched it they suddenly saw the black phantom-like forms of three canoes sweep swiftly across the path of light. They were within bow-shot of the shore, and were apparently making for the end of the lake.

"The Mohawks have fooled us," said Running Fox. "Now they will get to the river ahead of us. Perhaps they will wait at the end of this water. We must keep a sharp watch."

He had barely finished speaking when a loon called a short distance farther down the lake. The Delawares felt certain that it was a signal from the canoemen. In a few moments they were sure of it when they heard a fox yapping on the opposite shore. Then close behind them sounded the call of Gokhos, the owl.

"The Mohawks are all around us," whispered Spotted Deer.

They believed that there was a shorter trail between the Mohawk camp and the head of the lake, which accounted for the Mohawks overtaking them. It was evident that they hoped to intercept them before they reached the river. Spotted Deer proposed that when they reached the end of the lake they should make a long detour toward the east, and gradually circle back to the river. Running Fox promptly decided against it.

"No, that would take a long time," he said. "We have done what we set out to do. Now we must take the shortest trail to our people. I believe we will find danger any way we go. The best way is to go ahead until we strike the river."

"We will do as you say," agreed Spotted Deer.

Then for three long days they skulked through the forest endeavoring to reach the headwaters of the river. Twice they were turned back, and compelled to make long, wearying detours. When they finally reached their goal near the end of the fourth day, they were almost on the point of collapse. However, the sight of the river gave them new strength, for it seemed like a friendly trail to their own village.

"Now we will soon be with our people," laughed Spotted Deer.

"We will find much danger before we reach them," Running Fox warned him.

The Delawares had little doubt that the Mohawks had canoes concealed somewhere near the headwaters of the river, but they believed they had already been put to use by their owners. Therefore, the lads determined to take no chances trying to find them. Their one thought was to reach their people in time to warn them against the great war-party that they felt sure would follow them to the Delaware camp.

Late the second day they suddenly came in sight of a single canoe directly ahead of them. It contained three Mohawk warriors, and was close to the shore along which the Delawares were traveling. The paddlers appeared tired, and the lads felt certain that they had paddled desperately down the river in a last effort to overtake them before they reached the Delaware hunting grounds.

"Look, those warriors are coming to the shore," whispered Spotted Deer.

Shortly afterward the Mohawks brought the

canoe to land, and two of the paddlers stepped out. The third, however, remained in the canoe, and paddled across to the opposite shore. Then, he, too, landed, and drew the canoe into the bushes. Then all three Mohawks disappeared into the woods.

"Those warriors have come a long ways ahead of the war-party to look for us," whispered Running Fox. "If they do not find us they will wait until their people come."

The lads were fearful of colliding with the canoemen who had disembarked on their side of the river, and they determined to hide themselves until darkness made it safe to advance. While they were waiting, Spotted Deer suddenly formed a daring plan for outwitting their foes.

"When it gets dark I am going to swim across the water, and get that canoe," he told Running Fox.

The latter shook his head. It was some moments before he replied.

"No, you must not do that," said Running Fox.

"Yes, I am going to do it," declared Spotted Deer. "You are the leader, but you must stay

here until I see what happens to me. You have done a great thing. You will bring great power to our people. It would be foolish for you to get killed. If I get that canoe I will come back and get you before it gets light. If I do not come back by that time you will know that I have been killed. Then you must do the best you can to reach our people. Now I am not going to talk any more about it."

"Spotted Deer, you are very brave," said Running Fox. "If you get that canoe it will be a good thing for us. Yes, then we can get away from the Mohawks, and go to our people very fast. But you must not let anything happen to you. Perhaps the Mohawks have set a trap. Perhaps the warrior who dragged the canoe into the bushes is watching. You must be very careful."

"I will watch sharp," Spotted Deer assured him.

Spotted Deer did not wait long after darkness fell. He believed that his chances for success would be better if he made his attempt during the early part of the night. He felt quite sure that at that time the Mohawks would still be intent upon

watching, but he feared that if he waited until later they might become discouraged and decide to abandon their vigil. Running Fox held the same opinion.

"Now I am going," Spotted Deer whispered, when he was ready. "It may take me a long time, but you must creep down close to the water and keep listening. If I get the canoe I will come back near this spot. When I get near the land I will slap the water like Amoch, the beaver. When you hear that you must throw a little stone into the water. It will make a splash like Maschilamek, the trout, and the Mohawks will think nothing of it. But I will know what it means. Now I am going."

"Go. I will watch for you," said Running Fox.

A moment later Spotted Deer disappeared into the dark as silently as a shadow. He turned directly toward the river, and when he came in sight of the water he stopped to listen. Clouds filled the sky, and the night was black and still. Spotted Deer raised his face toward the heavens, and asked Getanittowit to aid him in his task. Then he advanced to the edge of the water. For a mo-

ment or so he stood there looking and listening. Then he waded carefully from the shore.

The river was narrow and still at that spot, and Spotted Deer crossed it without difficulty. As he approached the shore he ceased swimming, and turned upon his back. He floated a long time, listening for a warning of danger. Then as he heard nothing to arouse his suspicions he swam to the shore.

It took only a few moments to wade from the water, and cross the narrow beach between the river and the stand of willows in which the Mohawk had concealed the canoe. Spotted Deer entered the cover with great caution, for he feared an ambush. His fears proved groundless, however, and he reached the canoe in safety. Then he hesitated. The most perilous part of his task was still before him, and he was somewhat in doubt as to just how to proceed. He doubted his ability to carry the canoe to the water, and still he realized that if he attempted to drag it through the dense tangle of bushes he might make sufficient noise to warn the Mohawk. Still there seemed to be only those two alternatives, and he knew that

every moment he delayed he increased his peril. He lifted the bow of the canoe to the level of his knees, and saw at once that it would be almost impossible to get it to his shoulders. The question was decided, therefore he would be compelled to drag it.

Holding his bow and arrows in one hand, Spotted Deer started to draw the canoe from the willows. It was not an easy task, and the young Delaware trembled at the noise he made. Each moment he expected to find the Mohawk at his throat. Once out of the willows, however, he made better progress. He had almost reached the water when he heard a twig snap at the edge of the woods. Believing that he had been discovered, he threw off his caution, and dragged the canoe toward the water with no attempt to conceal the noise. As he launched it and clambered in over the side, he heard the Mohawk running toward the river. Several strong paddle strokes carried him from the shore, and then the night hid him from his foe.

As Spotted Deer paddled frantically toward the opposite shore of the river, he heard the Mohawk

yelling furiously to warn his friends. The anxious lad realized that once they reached the river it might be impossible to rescue Running Fox. The thought drove him to still greater exertions. As yet the two scouts had failed to answer the frantic appeals of their tribesman. Then, when Spotted Deer was two-thirds of the way across, he heard them signaling with the notes of the owl. Still they seemed to be some distance back from the water, and he had hopes of picking up Running Fox before they could reach the river.

Once within bow-shot of the shore, Spotted Deer ceased paddling and struck the water a resounding whack with the blade of his paddle. Then he listened anxiously for the splash of a stone. Several moments passed, and the silence remained unbroken. Spotted Deer again struck the water with his paddle. Still there was no answer. Spotted Deer suddenly grew weak with fear. He believed that something had happened to Running Fox. The possibility staggered him. He was unable to rally his wits. Then he heard the Mohawk on the opposite side of the river imitating the scream of Nianque, the lynx. A moment afterward the

signal was answered from the edge of the woods, a bow-shot farther down the river. The next instant a stone struck the water within a bow-length of the canoe.

Wild with joy, Spotted Deer paddled furiously toward the shore. Running Fox waded out to meet him. As he stepped into the canoe, an arrow sang harmlessly past them. The next moment they heard the Mohawks rushing into the water below them.

"Paddle hard!" cried Running Fox. "They will swim out and try to catch us."

"We will get by them," declared Spotted Deer. "Keep watching ahead."

He turned the canoe toward the opposite side of the river, and put all his strength into his paddle strokes. Then, when he was half-way across, he turned down the river. They had gone several arrow-flights when Running Fox called a warning. A moment later they flashed past one of the Mohawks, who was floundering desperately within three bow-lengths of them.

"Now we are safe," said Spotted Deer.

"Yes, I believe we have got away," replied

Running Fox. "You have done a great thing."

Spotted Deer asked Running Fox why he had been so slow in replying to his signal. Running Fox said that at the time he heard it one of the Mohawks was somewhere within a few bow-lengths of him, and he had feared to make the slightest move. He had been compelled to wait, therefore, until the Mohawk moved away.

"Well, we have fooled them," declared Spotted Deer.

"Yes, that is true," replied Running Fox. "But I believe they will bring a great war-party to fight us."

CHAPTER XVIII

THE IROQUOIS BLUNDER INTO A TRAP

TWO days later the lads reached the Delaware village. Their sudden appearance caused a great commotion. "Running Fox has come! Running Fox has come!" cried the Delawares. The news brought a great crowd to the edge of the water. The enthusiasm was intense. Many of the younger warriors waded out, and dragged the canoe to the shore. Then Running Fox held up the sacred medicine-trophy, and the people went into ecstasies of joy. "See, Running Fox has brought the scalp of Gokhos, the mysterious white Medicine Owl," they cried, excitedly.

As soon as the exhausted young warriors stepped from the canoe they were surrounded by a great throng of friends who instantly began to ply them with questions. Running Fox left Spotted Deer to struggle with them, while he hurried away to find his father.

Black Panther showed little surprise as his son entered the lodge, and offered him the famous trophy for which he had risked his life. However, the lad's mother flung herself upon him, and wept for joy. When he had tenderly freed himself from her arms, Running Fox turned toward the stern Delaware war-chief. The latter showed his pride and his joy in his eyes, and the young warrior was satisfied.

"My son, you have come back," said Black Panther. "It is good. I see that you have brought the scalp of Gokhos, the Medicine Owl. Where did you find it?"

"I found it in the sacred Medicine Bundle, which hangs in the Medicine Lodge of our enemies, the Mohawks. I believe it is the thing that gave Standing Wolf his power over us. Yes, I saw him talking to the Medicine Spirits with this thing in his hands."

"Well, my son, you have done a great thing," declared Black Panther, striving hard to conceal his emotion. "You are only a boy, but you have done more than the bravest warrior. But you must not think about that. No, you must find out

how to get those mysterious powers, so that you can help your people, and become a great chief. Take this thing to Sky Dog, and ask him what to do."

"Yes, I will go, but first I must warn you that a great war-party of Mohawks are coming to fight us," said Running Fox.

"How do you know that?" Black Panther asked, sharply.

"The scouts followed us a long ways down the river, and the Mohawks are very mad. I believe Standing Wolf will bring a great war-party here to try to get back this mysterious Medicine Thing."

The warning seemed to make a strong impression upon Black Panther. He immediately summoned a picked company of scouts, and sent them away to watch for the Mohawks. Then he called a council of the principal war-leaders to form plans for defending the village. It was evident that the possibility of Standing Wolf leading his great war-party against the camp filled even Black Panther with considerable uneasiness.

In the meantime Running Fox had hastened to the lodge of old Sky Dog. As usual the aged

medicine-man showed little interest as the visitor entered the lodge. A moment afterward, however, when he learned who it was he began to grow excited.

"Hi, I see that you have lived to come back," he said. "That is because I helped you. I have done some wonderful things, but this is the greatest. Well, tell me what has happened to you."

When Running Fox showed him the medicine-trophy, and related his experiences since he left the camp, Sky Dog looked at him in astonishment. It was apparent that he found difficulty in believing the story. He gazed searchingly into the eyes of the lad, and examined the medicine-trophy many times before he committed himself. Then he seemed satisfied that the exploit was genuine.

"My son, I have listened to your words," he said, soberly. "At first I did not believe them. But now I know that you have told the truth. Yes, I see that you have done the greatest thing I ever knew about. But you must not feel too big about it. You must prepare yourself to become a great leader. Take this sacred Medicine Thing, and keep it about you whenever you are

about to do anything big. It will give you great power. But you must not give it to any one else. If you do that, something bad will surely happen to you. Now I will tell you something. Standing Wolf and his people will come here to get that great Medicine Thing. Yes, they will come here before two suns pass. There will be a great battle. Many people will be killed. Perhaps the Medicine Thing will help you. Perhaps it will still help Standing Wolf. If it helps him, then you must get rid of it. Sometimes these things turn out that way. There is only one way to find out about it. You must carry it into the thick of the fight. If it gives you power you will do great things. If it turns against you, you will surely be killed. Now you must go and rest. I have spoken."

"Sky Dog, I will do as you tell me," replied Running Fox.

Several days passed and still there was no word of the Mohawks. The Delawares began to hope that they had been needlessly alarmed. Some of them even began to doubt that the skin of the white Medicine Owl had really come from the Mo-

hawk medicine-bundle. However, they were careful to keep their suspicions from reaching the ears of Running Fox or his father. Others declared that Standing Wolf was afraid to fight without the protection of his medicine charm. Still Black Panther and his war-leaders continued to make preparations for the battle. They knew Standing Wolf too well to deceive themselves by believing that he would surrender his most valued possession without making a desperate attempt to regain it from his foes. The delay only strengthened their fears, for they believed he had sent runners to induce some of the neighboring tribes of Iroquois to join in the attack on the Delaware camp.

Then the suspense was suddenly ended by the return of one of the scouts. He said that a great company of Iroquois were coming down the river in canoes, and the Delaware scouts had little doubt that many more were traveling through the forest on foot. He declared that the Delawares would be greatly outnumbered, as it appeared that the Mohawks had been strongly reinforced by some of their neighbors from farther to the westward.

The Delawares became greatly disturbed at the news. They had fought more than one losing fight with the fierce Mohawk chief and his savage warriors, and they fully realized the nature of the task that confronted them. Besides, the village sheltered many women and children, and the warriors dreaded to think what might happen if the Mohawks forced their way into the camp. They knew from experience that once roused, the Mohawks would kill every man, woman and child that fell into their hands. For a time, therefore, the Delawares thought of abandoning the camp and fleeing southward to the village of their tribesmen, the Minsi, another tribe of the Lenape nation who lived a full day's journey farther down the river. However, when Black Panther heard of their fears he immediately called them to assemble in council.

"Men of the Lenape nation, what has happened to your hearts?" demanded the Delaware warchief. "Have the Delawares turned into rabbits? Do you tremble when you hear the name of Standing Wolf? Come, you must answer me."

The stern rebuke was received in silence. More

than one stalwart warrior lowered his eyes in shame as Black Panther challenged him. Then as no one spoke, the chief continued.

"You have heard that the Mohawks are coming to fight us. Well, what will you do about it? Do you feel like running away? I do not believe it. You say that Standing Wolf has mysterious power over us. Well, I will tell you that he has lost it. Running Fox has taken it away from him. The great Mohawk war-chief is like a bear without claws. He can do no harm. Running Fox will carry the mysterious Medicine Thing into the fight. If you follow him he will lead you to victory. It is true that we have never beaten Standing Wolf, but this time it will be different. Yes, Sky Dog will tell you that. Come, I will tell you what to do. First we will send scouts down the river to ask our brothers, the Minsi, to come and help us. Then we will send the women and children down the river in canoes. A warrior will sit in each canoe. Whoever is afraid of Standing Wolf must leave his weapons, and go with the women and children. The rest of us will stay here, and meet

the boastful Mohawks. Now, my brothers, let me see who is afraid to stay."

Not even the youngest boy responded. The Delawares answered the challenge with a great shout of defiance that seemed to shake the hills. Then they began to sing their war-songs, and parade about the camp. In a few moments they called for Running Fox to address them.

"My brothers, I am a young man, and I have not much to say," Running Fox told them, modestly. "I have brought you the thing which gave Standing Wolf his mysterious power over us. Now I am going to carry it into the thick of the fight. I believe we will win a great victory. Now we must get ready to fight."

Then old Sky Dog rose and delivered a fiery harangue that instantly roused the fighting mood of the warriors. He told them that Running Fox had done the most wonderful thing in the history of the tribe. He declared that the possession of the Mohawk medicine-trophy not only insured them against defeat, but made victory certain. Then he called upon them to go forth, and fight as they had never fought before.

In the meantime Spotted Deer and a young warrior named Little Snake had already departed down the river to summon aid of the Minsi. The canoes had been launched, and the women and children were getting into them. Now that the Delawares had become eager to fight, it was difficult to get warriors to accompany them. However, Black Panther selected the escort, and chose the young untried warriors and a few of the older men who had been disabled in previous fights.

The refugees had barely left the village when scouts brought word that the Mohawks had disembarked about a half day's journey from the camp. The scouts said that it was evident they intended to advance through the woods on the north side of the camp.

"The river was covered with canoes," declared an excited Delaware scout.

Black Panther immediately called for a company of volunteers to go out and lie in wait for the Mohawks. Most of the warriors responded, and he chose a third of his entire force. Then he appointed Running Fox the leader. It was an unusual honor for a lad of his years, but he had

proved his ability, and the Delawares were ready to follow him. They had little doubt that the Mohawk medicine-trophy would bring him the same powers which they believed it had bestowed upon Standing Wolf, and they expected to see him accomplish equally wonderful feats.

"My son, I have made you the leader of this war-party," said Black Panther, as the lad came to him for final instructions. "You are very young, and you have not been in many fights. You must listen to what I am about to say. There are some great war-leaders in your party. There is Broken Hand, and Two Elks, and Painted Dog. All those men are great leaders. You must ask them to help you. But I have made you the leader. You must know what to do. Now I will tell you. The Mohawks have left the canoes. They will probably come down along this side of the river. You must send good scouts ahead of you to find which way the Mohawks are coming. It will be necessary to send some scouts across the river, for the Mohawks may come down that side. Well, when you have found out which way the Mohawks are coming you must put your warriors

in their way. You must hold them back until I get a chance to prepare the camp. You must find a good place to hide in. Do not show yourselves until the Mohawks are right between you. Then you must rush in and fool them. You must try to kill as many as you can, and drive back the others. That may hold them off until we can get ready to fight. However, if they are too strong for you, you must fight your way back to the village. I have finished."

"My father, I will do as you have told me," replied Running Fox. "I will talk with Broken Hand, and Two Elks and Painted Dog. We will try to make a good fight."

Running Fox and his companions left the village in silence, for Black Panther had cautioned the Delawares against making a demonstration. The sun was low in the west, and the valiant company of fighters hurried through the woods in the hope of finding the Mohawks before it grew dark. Several of the scouts who had already located the enemy were sent on ahead, and three other scouts were sent across the river in a canoe to watch along the opposite shore.

By the time darkness finally closed down the Delawares had traveled a considerable distance along the river. Then they stopped, and waited to hear from the scouts. It was not long before one of them brought word that the main Mohawk war-party was close at hand. He said that they were following the Delaware hunting trail, and had sent a number of scouts ahead of them. The Delawares lost little time in concealing themselves along the sides of a narrow ravine. Then they waited anxiously for the Mohawks to blunder into the ambush.

A short time afterward the Mohawk scouts entered the ravine. The Delawares allowed them to pass through in safety. However, when the war-party attempted to follow, the Delawares rose from concealment and attacked them with great fury. The Mohawks were completely surprised, and for a time they were thrown into great confusion. The Delawares had little trouble in driving them from the ravine, and elated at their success they attempted to turn the surprise into a rout. It was only a few moments, however, before they discovered that they had made a serious

blunder. What they had mistaken for the war-party was only an advance guard following the scouts. When the main war-party rushed up a few moments later, the Delawares found themselves outnumbered by four to one. Still Running Fox had no idea of retreating. He had been sent to delay the Mohawks as long as possible, and he determined to make them fight every stride of the way to the Delaware camp. Calling upon his war-leaders to follow him, the young warrior fought with a reckless fury that amazed his foes. Stimulated by his example, the Delawares not only held their ground, but actually forced the Mohawks to give way. The advantage was only temporary, however, for the Mohawks soon rallied, and attacked so fiercely that the Delawares in turn were compelled to yield. They retreated slowly, however, fighting so stubbornly that the Mohawks began to grow cautious.

Running Fox had many narrow escapes, for he threw himself into the thickest of the fighting. Twice he was compelled to fight desperate hand to hand encounters with his foes, and each time he came off victorious. At another time he was

attacked by three Mohawks at once, but he succeeded in dodging behind a tree and killed two of his assailants, and wounded the third. The Delawares began to believe that the sacred white Medicine Owl had made him invincible. Running Fox himself believed it, and the thought gave him confidence.

The Delawares held back the Mohawks until daylight, and then the latter suddenly retired. Running Fox knew better than to attempt to follow them. He feared that the withdrawal was part of some clever stratagem, and he immediately called a council of his war-leaders.

"I believe the Mohawks will wait until it gets dark again, and then they will try to circle around us," said Broken Hand. "I believe the best thing we can do is to go back to the village. We have held back the Mohawks until our women and children are safe. We can do no good by staying here and throwing away our lives. I believe we can make a better showing with our people at the village."

"I feel strange about this thing," declared Two Elks. "You have done some wonderful things,

but if you stay here I believe you will be killed. I cannot help telling you this, because that is how I feel about it."

"I feel like Broken Hand," said Painted Dog. "I have not seen Standing Wolf in this fight. I believe he is somewhere about with another big war-party. I saw many Oneidas in this war-party. Yes, I believe I killed an Onondaga. Those people may be coming to help the Mohawks. Running Fox, you are a good leader. You have done some wonderful things. But there are only a few of us. Some of our friends have already been killed. The Mohawks are too strong for us. If we stay here they will come back and destroy us. I believe we must try to get away."

"Well, my brothers, I have listened to your words, and I see that you all feel the same way about it. I would like to stay and fight some more, but I believe it would be foolish. We have done what we came here to do. We have held back the Mohawks so that our people can get ready to fight. It is enough. Come, we will go."

CHAPTER XIX

THE ATTACK ON THE DELAWARE CAMP

WHEN Running Fox and his companions returned to the camp they found everything in readiness for an attack. As there was no stockade about the village, the Delawares had hastily thrown up a number of barricades made of logs and stones. Inside of the camp were several large brush-piles to be lighted if the Mohawks attempted to enter the camp under cover of the darkness. Water had been brought from the river, and two boys had been selected to climb to the roof of each lodge as soon as the fighting began to watch for fire-arrows.

Running Fox went to Black Panther and gave him a full account of the fight with the Mohawks. The Delaware chief seemed much pleased, and said that if the Mohawks had not been intercepted and held up they would have reached the village before he had a chance to prepare for defense.

"My son, you have done a good thing," he told Running Fox.

Soon afterward the scouts who had been sent across the river came into the camp, and said that they had seen nothing of their foes.

"That is good," declared Black Panther. "Now we know that the Mohawks are all together."

The Delawares had little fear that the Mohawks would begin their attack before dark, still they determined to be ready for any emergency. Therefore, as the sun sank slowly toward the hill-tops they gathered in the center of the camp to receive their final instructions from the war-chief.

"My brothers, I have little to tell you," said Black Panther. "You know what has happened. Now the Mohawks have come to fight us. Running Fox has broken the power of their great chief, Standing Wolf. I believe we will be able to overcome him. We must all be brave. We must keep our enemies outside of the camp. Pretty soon our brothers, the Minsi, will come to help us. No matter what happens we must keep fighting until they get here. Do not let anything make you afraid.

If we win this great battle, the Mohawks will never trouble us again. I have finished."

When Black Panther finished speaking the Delawares stationed themselves along the edge of the camp to watch for their foes. The night was well advanced, however, before they heard anything to rouse their suspicions. Then they heard the Mohawks signaling on two sides of the camp. It was evident, therefore, that there were either two distinct war-parties, or else the Mohawks had separated to attack the village on two sides.

The Delawares waited calmly at their posts, each man grimly determined to avenge the long list of tribesmen who had died at the hands of those fierce and implacable foes. The signals soon ceased, and then for a long time all was still. The Delawares waited in trying suspense. A little group of warriors huddled behind each barricade, and between them, at the edge of the camp, were others to close the gaps. Black Panther and the war-leaders moved back and forth between them.

The stillness was suddenly broken by a piercing yell, and a moment later it was answered by another on the other side of the camp. Then the Mo-

hawks began their attack. They rushed toward the village shouting fiercely, but the Delawares faced them without a tremor. They waited until their foes were within a few bow-lengths of them, and then they rose and met them with such a deadly volley of arrows that the astounded Mohawks recoiled in confusion.

Then the Delaware war-cry rang triumphantly through the night, and the Mohawks rallied at the sound. Roused to a fury by the stubborn resistance of their foes, they fought with a reckless daring that carried them to the very edge of the camp. There they met the Delawares in a fierce hand to hand encounter. Although they had a tremendous advantage in numbers the Mohawks found themselves outfought at every point of contact with their courageous foes. Strive as they might, they were unable to gain a foothold in the camp. They heard the familiar voice of Standing Wolf urging them to victory, but it had suddenly lost its power. The Mohawks began to realize that the fight was going against them. Aware that they were wasting themselves in vain,

they suddenly became demoralized, and retreated in wild disorder.

The Delawares were frantic with delight. They had beaten back the boastful Mohawks for the first time since Standing Wolf had begun to make war upon them. Still they dared not become too hopeful, for they feared that their success might prove to be only temporary. They had little doubt that the Mohawks would speedily renew the attack, and they knew that next time the fortunes of war might again turn in their favor. However, their temporary victory gave them confidence, and they determined to fight even harder when the Mohawks resumed the battle. They believed that the sacred medicine-trophy had already made them invincible.

"My brothers, we have beaten off the boastful Mohawks, but we are not through," cried Black Panther. "Do not feel too sure. They will come again. Next time they will fight harder. They are much stronger than we are. Yes, I believe there are three Mohawks for every Delaware. But I saw some Oneidas and Onondagas. It is a great

war-party. We must fight very hard to keep alive until help comes. Now we must watch."

Darkness had given way to the soft gray light of dawn when the Mohawks made their second attempt to enter the village. This time they attacked the camp on three sides, and the fighting was even fiercer than in the first encounter. They were led by Standing Wolf and some of the most noted Iroquois war-chiefs, and for an instant the Delawares lost confidence. The Mohawks were quick to see their advantage, and they fought recklessly to make the most of it. Rushing to the barricades they struggled desperately with the gallant men who defended them. In one or two places they overwhelmed them by force of numbers, and succeeded in breaking through the line.

"Come, my brothers, we must fight harder!" shouted Black Panther, as he ran boldly along the edge of the camp. "Standing Wolf has lost his power. Running Fox has found it. Come, drive these boastful enemies from the camp!"

Then Running Fox threw himself into the thick of the fight. Gathering a little company of followers, he led them against the Mohawks who had

reached the edge of the camp. Waving the sacred medicine-trophy, and calling upon his companions to follow him, he attacked his foes with such ferocity that they fell back astounded. Before they could recover from their surprise, the Delawares rallied, and drove them beyond the barricades.

Then a warning came from the other side of the camp. Again Running Fox led a gallant company to meet the invaders. This time, however, their task was more difficult, and for a time the Delawares were unable to dislodge their foes. Then in a thrilling hand to hand encounter Running Fox killed the warrior who led the attack, and the Mohawks suddenly lost their courage, and fell back.

Word of his prowess was instantly spread among the Delawares, and they were finally convinced that the mysterious Mohawk medicine-trophy was responsible for his remarkable success. The thought strengthened their confidence, and filled them with such dogged determination that the Mohawks were again compelled to fall back before their stubborn resistance.

"Well, my brothers, you have made a great fight," Black Panther cried, enthusiastically.

"The Mohawks have found out that we are men. They tried to get into the camp, but we were too strong for them. Running Fox has done some great things. It must be that the mysterious Medicine Thing is helping him. But we are not through with this fight. I believe it will last a long time. Well, we will not give in. No, we will keep fighting no matter how long it takes. See, the Mohawks have disappeared into the woods. The full light has come. It is good. I do not believe the Mohawks will begin to fight again until it gets dark. Perhaps they have gone away. Well, we will not let them fool us. We will keep watching."

The Delawares saw nothing further of their foes until near the end of the day, and then they again heard them signaling on both sides of the camp. It was evident that they were preparing to renew the attack. The Delawares knew what to expect. Still there was not one among them who showed the least trace of anxiety. They waited calmly, determined to fight if need be until the last of them was killed.

The attack was renewed at sunset, and the Del-

awares were astounded to find that on this occasion their foes were Oneidas and Onondagas. They knew at once that the wily Mohawk war-chief had been holding these hardy fighters in reserve, and had called upon them to relieve his own warriors when the latter showed signs of weakening before the deadly resistance of the Delawares.

"Hi, my brothers, the Mohawks have sent others to do what they cannot do themselves!" cried Black Panther. "Come, we will show these people how to fight!"

Although the unexpected appearance of the new fighting force filled them with dismay, the Delawares fought as stubbornly as ever. The odds were all against them, however, and they realized that only the timely arrival of their tribesmen, the Minsi, could save them from disaster.

CHAPTER XX

VICTORY

FIGHTING continued at intervals throughout the night, and daylight found the exhausted Delawares still keeping weary vigil at the edge of the camp. They had lost almost half of their number, and they were discouraged and hopeless. They watched the dawn of the new day with gloomy forebodings, for they feared to imagine what might happen before it ended. The Iroquois showed no intention of abandoning the fight, and the Delawares knew that unless their tribesmen arrived to help them it would be only a short time before they were finally overcome. They felt sure that the three war-parties would unite for the final attack, and they knew that there was little chance of holding them off. Each grim Delaware warrior felt defeat and death hovering over him.

"My brothers, a new day has come," said Black Panther. "Before it ends I believe our brothers,

the Minsi, will come to help us. Pretty soon we will hear them shouting the war-cry. Then the Iroquois will run like rabbits. We must keep our hearts brave. We have killed many of our enemies. They tried to get into our lodges, but we beat them back. Now they are hiding out there in the woods. Yes, they are afraid to face us in the light. Come, we will let them hear our war-cry."

Roused by the words of their chief, the Delawares rallied from their gloom and sent their war-cry ringing through the forest. The Iroquois immediately answered the challenge, and the Delawares shook their heads soberly. However, as the time passed, and the Iroquois made no further attempts against the village, the Delawares began to take heart. They believed that their foes were waiting to make one supreme effort under cover of the night, and they hoped that the Minsi war-party would arrive in the meantime.

Then as the long day finally passed and their tribesmen failed to appear the Delawares again lost heart. The approach of night filled them with dread. They feared that long before daylight they

would be overcome by the superior numbers of their foes. The possibility staggered them. They suddenly realized what it meant. They would be wiped out, destroyed from the land, and their women and children would be homeless. The thought filled them with new determination. They pledged themselves to fight even harder than they had fought before.

As the ominous black shadows finally settled over the camp, the Delawares nerved themselves for their task. They knew that the attack would come suddenly, at any moment, and the thought kept them in trying suspense. Then as the night dragged on and nothing happened, they began to grow suspicious. They wondered if the Iroquois were stealing silently upon them under cover of the darkness. They strained their ears to catch a warning. All was still. The Delawares were bewildered. The uncanny silence strained their nerves. Each moment they expected to hear the terrifying Iroquois war-cry, and see their foes within arm's reach of them. Then some one shouted a warning from the end of the camp. The

suspense was ended. The fight had begun. The Delawares felt relieved.

"Light the fires! Light the fires!" cried the warriors near the point of attack.

"No, no, not yet!" shouted Black Panther.

Then a streak of fire flashed through the night, and fell into the village. It was a fire-arrow. The boys were ordered to the tops of the lodges. A moment afterward the great Iroquois war-party rushed upon the camp. They had approached close up to the barricades before the Delawares discovered them. Then at the proper signal they rose, and grappled with them. The Delawares fought desperately, but they were hopelessly outnumbered, and it seemed to be only a matter of moments before the Iroquois would force their way into the camp.

"Light the fires! Light the fires!" screamed the Delawares.

This time Black Panther realized the necessity for it. Then as the flames roared through the piles of dry brush, and flooded the village with light, he saw the Iroquois at the edge of the camp. They were fighting recklessly to gain a foothold in the

village, but the Delawares were attacking them like a swarm of angry bees. Onondagas, Oneidas and Mohawks had combined, and Standing Wolf himself was leading them. For a time the Delawares held them off, but the odds against them were too great, and the Iroquois eventually fought their way into the camp.

For an instant the Delawares faltered. Then they rallied about their gallant war-chief and fought with the fury of despair. They had gathered in force at one end of the camp, and the Iroquois were unable to dislodge them. The Delawares knew that if they were scattered and driven from the village they would be surrounded and annihilated. Therefore, they determined to stand together until the end.

Running Fox was in a frenzy of despair. He realized that he alone was to blame for the plight of his tribesmen, and the thought drove him to distraction. It seemed as if his perilous journey to the Mohawk camp had been in vain. The mysterious Medicine Creatures had apparently deceived him. The sacred medicine-trophy for which he had risked his life seemed powerless

against the famous Mohawk war-chief. Getanittowit appeared to have turned against him. Instead of aiding his people, the distracted lad believed that he had brought about their destruction. He had fought with a recklessness that had astounded both his tribesmen and their foes, and still it seemed to have been in vain. Running Fox was beside himself with grief. In the midst of the desperate encounter he raised his arms toward the sky and called upon Getanittowit to help him. "O Getanittowit, see what has happened to me. O Getanittowit, give me power to help my people. O Getanittowit, send the powerful Medicine Creatures to aid me," he shouted excitedly.

Then a loud mocking laugh rose above the sounds of battle. Running Fox did not need to look. He knew instinctively that it came from Standing Wolf. A moment afterward he saw him fighting recklessly at the head of his warriors. As usual he seemed to bear a charmed life. His tribesmen were dropping on both sides of him, but as yet he was unharmed.

"See, we cannot harm that man!" the Dela-

wares told one another in superstitious awe. "It is useless to fight him. He will kill us all!"

"No! No! He cannot harm you, for I am going to kill him!" Running Fox cried, hysterically. "See, I have the skin of Gokhos, the great white Medicine Owl. My brothers, I have taken away the power from Standing Wolf. I have just found out about it. Now you will see something. I am going to kill that man. I am going to bring our brothers, the Minsi. Pretty soon you will hear them. Now you must watch me."

The next moment he bounded past his astonished tribesmen, and advanced fearlessly upon the Mohawk chief. The latter shot an arrow at him, but it flew harmlessly past his head. Then, as Running Fox laughed and pointed to the medicine-trophy which hung upon his breast, Standing Wolf uttered a yell of rage and rushed forward, war-club in hand. Before he had taken two strides Running Fox drove an arrow through his heart.

"See, my brothers, see what I have done!" screamed Running Fox, as he drove back several

Mohawks who had rushed upon him to avenge the death of their chief.

"It is the Medicine Spirits!" cried the Delawares, as they ran to his support.

"Yes, I have the power!" shouted Running Fox. "Come, you must follow me!"

He led the Delawares in a furious attack that utterly routed the faltering Mohawks. The death of their famous chief had demoralized them, and as they saw their comrades falling before the deadly arrows of the wild-eyed young Delaware and his followers they suddenly became panic-stricken and fled from the camp.

At that very instant the Delaware war-cry rang through the night and a moment afterward a great company of Minsi fighting men poured into the village. They threw themselves upon the bewildered Oneidas and Onondagas and completely overwhelmed them. The Minsi gained a quick and easy victory, for the superstitious Iroquois believed that some powerful Medicine Spirit had suddenly come to the aid of their foes, and they made little attempt to resist them. Finding themselves in danger of being speedily annihilated by the fierce

fighters who had suddenly appeared before them, they, too, retreated from the camp in wild disorder, and sought safety in flight. However, the Delawares were determined to make the most of their victory, and they followed their fleeing foes far into the wilderness, exacting a terrible vengeance for the many wrongs which they had suffered at the hands of Standing Wolf and his followers.

Late the following day when the last of the Delaware fighting men had returned to the camp, Black Panther called upon all to assemble and give thanks for the victory. It was a notable gathering, and the stern Delaware war-chief looked upon his warriors with great pride. Then his eyes sought out Running Fox, and for a moment he was almost overcome by his emotion.

"My people, we have won a great victory," said Black Panther. "Standing Wolf, the great Mohawk war-chief, is dead. Many of his people have followed him. The warriors who escaped are running toward their villages. It will be a long time

before they come here again. Do you know how all this came about? Well, I will tell you. It is because Running Fox went into the Mohawk camp, and brought away the skin of the mysterious white Medicine Owl. Spotted Deer went with him. Those young warriors have done the greatest thing that has ever been done by a Delaware. But Running Fox has done something bigger than that. He has killed the great chief Standing Wolf. That fierce warrior killed many of our people. Yes, he killed many of our women and children. He destroyed our crops, and burned our lodges. We wished to live in peace, but he would not let us. He brought great trouble upon us. Now he will never trouble us again. Running Fox has brought it to pass. He is very young, but he has become a great warrior. Yes, he must have a place in the council-circle. I have finished."

The Delawares greeted the announcement with shouts of approval. They called Running Fox and Spotted Deer to stand in the center of the camp, while the great war-party paraded around them, singing the songs of victory. Then they suddenly

stopped, and raised their voices in the great tribute which was only given to the famous war-chiefs of the nation. It was a high honor, and the happy lads strove hard to conceal their pride as they looked joyfully into each other's eyes.

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THE END